WISDOM IN SOUL WINNING

WILLIAM WISTAR HAMILTON

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How to Grow in the Christian Life
Worldly Amusements, How to Decide
The Helping Hand
Bible Evangelism
Sane Evangelism
Sermons on Books of the Bible

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Dedicated to
THE GOOD MOTHER
Who Told the Ten-Year-Old Boy
How to Find the
Saviour

DIRECTIONS FOR THE STUDY OF THIS BOOK

For those who wish to study the book as a part of the Church Administration Study Course and with a view to receiving the award offered by that Department, the following directions are given:

1. *Lesson Assignments.*

Under ordinary conditions each chapter may constitute a suitable lesson assignment.

In training schools offering two periods of work each day for five days two chapters may be studied during each period; thus time will remain for review and examination.

When used in college courses the professor is expected to use his own discretion as to assignments and requirements.

2. *Examinations.*

(1) The teacher will conduct a written examination at the close of the study of the book.

(2) The questions may be selected by the class teacher from the list of questions given at the close of the book. The teacher will ask that each one sign this statement: "I have neither given nor received help during this examination."

(3) Members of the class will be asked to answer the questions at one sitting without the textbook or help of any kind.

(4) The class teacher will examine the papers of the class and, on blanks which will be furnished for the purpose, will send the names of those who make the required grade of seventy per cent to the Department of Church Administration, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee. The proper award will be sent forward.

3. *Individual Students May Pursue the Study in Their Own Way.*

When they are ready for examination they will apply for a list of questions with necessary instructions. The questions will be selected from the list given at the close of the book.

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CHAPTER I

Wisdom Will Know How to Tell the Way of Salvation

Those who win souls to Christ show themselves wise, and those who would engage in this greatest business have need of wisdom of the highest order, a divine wisdom growing out of love and prayer. A man who serves in a boiler room on one of the piers in New York City, Mr. F. C. Wilson, has, within the past thirteen years, saved from drowning no less than twenty-eight persons. This work has become a passion with him, and he says he is living in hope of saving a hundred before he dies. His love for this work of life-saving reminds us of the legend of Alexander the Great, who is said to have found a man freezing to death, and the famous soldier roused the perishing man, rubbed him, helped him to a place of warmth and shelter, and finally rejoiced to see him revived and safe. Then the general said: "This is the happiest day I have ever known; I have saved a human life!"

There are surgeons and physicians, firemen and life-saving crews, nurses in hospitals, and many other workers who can sympathize with the principle here illustrated, and the example of such lovers of mankind ought to arouse in all Christian workers a new enthusiasm for humanity.

This evangelistic purpose is one to be cultivated every day by every follower of Jesus. He came "to seek and save that which was lost," and the author's hope is, that this book may at least in some small way help those who would be wise and who would rejoice in turning many to righteousness, for we are here to carry on the work of our Lord (John 17: 18).

He who would do his best in this wondrous task must have the great facts of salvation definitely in mind, must be alone with Jesus until the heart is on fire with a passion for souls, must as a trained workman know how to handle aright the Word of God, and must always remember that success does not come by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God.

The author has found the following to be a logical and Scriptural and effective course to pursue in the winning of men and women and children to our Lord Jesus Christ. If possible, have the time and place so arranged that there can be no interruptions, have the Bible in hand, have the inquirer read the passages from God's Word, seek to bring to definite surrender, and seal the confession in an audible prayer offered by the new convert:

(1) Show the lost one that *"all* have sinned" (Rom. 3: 23), that *"all* have gone astray" (Isa. 53: 6), that if not with Jesus then he is against him (Matt. 12: 30).

(2) Then show him that he is *"condemned already"* (John 3: 18), that he is abiding under the *wrath* of God (John 3: 36), that in his present condition there is *"no hope"* (Eph. 2: 12).

(3) Make it plain that *God loves him* (John 3: 16; Rom. 5: 8), and his *own choice* is all that can keep him from salvation (John 6: 37; 2 Pet. 3: 9). "Will not come" (John 5: 40).

(4) Let him see the *death wages* of sin (Rom. 6: 23), that there is only one way (Acts 4: 12), that Christ paid the debt on the cross (1 Pet. 2: 24), and that to receive him is to be saved (John 1: 12).

(5) *"Whosoever will"* (Rev. 22: 17) is God's invitation, and whatever it is that keeps one from coming is the *price of the soul* (Matt. 16: 24; 26: 15). Sin may be scarlet (Isa. 1: 18), but the blood of Jesus will cleanse (1 John 1: 7).

(6) *"Everlasting life"* is ours when we believe on him (John 6: 47). The way we prove our trust is by

obedience (John 15: 14), and his first command is to confess and be baptized (Matt. 10: 32; 3: 15).

(7) There is *danger* and *death* in *delay* (Heb. 2: 3). Now is the accepted time (2 Cor. 6: 2). Seek the Lord while he may be found (Isa. 55: 6). Concern means that the *Spirit is knocking* (John 16: 8), and if the Spirit ceases to strive then all hope is gone (John 6: 44, 65).

(8) Call *now* on the name of the Lord (Rom. 10: 13), say "God be *merciful* to me" (Luke 18: 13), and tell him that you accept Jesus as Saviour and Lord (John 1: 12), and that henceforth you will by his grace endeavor to do his will (John 7: 17).

God does not save the sinner by lowering the law, nor by excusing the transgressor, but by fulfilling the law and by paying all the debt. Christ becomes the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Rom. 10: 4), because in his own body on the cross the Saviour bore our sins, and by his stripes we are healed (1 Peter 2: 24). He satisfies the law, bears the just penalty, pays the full debt, takes our place, and we are saved from death through him. As Paul puts it in Romans 3: 26, God thus remains just and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

Let us imagine the case of one who is before the judge, and that the sentence of the law is "forty stripes save one." The culprit has done that which was wrong, and he is being led to punishment, and his own conscience approves the verdict. The judge's son comes to the father and says, "I know the sentence is just, and that crime must be punished; I know that you would be unworthy the position you hold if you should fail to punish wrong, but the law and right will be satisfied if a proper substitute takes his place and pays his debt and bears his stripes for him. He has done wrong and realizes it, and is grieved over his sin, and if you will accept me I will suffer in his stead."

It is agreed upon one condition, that the wrongdoer shall accept the son in his place, and shall promise that

from this time he purposes to live a different life. It is faith and repentance. The offer is made to the one who is under sentence, and he refuses, saying, "No, I do not deserve such love. I will not accept it." Then if the law is right and the judge is just, what possible escape can there be? The criminal must bear the penalty. The offer is renewed and is urged upon the condemned man. The love of father and son is commended, and finally the offer is accepted, and the substitute goes to the whipping post in the place of the wrongdoer. The hands are tied. The back is made bare, the lashes are laid on, five, ten, twenty, thirty! Nine more are still due. Thirty-five, thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight! One more! The eyes fill with tears at sight of that bleeding form, and at the thought of the shame endured. "Thirty-nine!" The law has been satisfied, and the offender goes free through unmerited favor, through grace.

The next day the court sends for the wrongdoer and says, "Did you break the law?" "Yes." "Well, your offense calls for forty stripes save one. Did you receive them?" "No." "Then take him now and lay upon him the penalty of his sins." Would that be just? No, no, no!!! Another has already borne his stripes. The law has been fulfilled, kept, honored, satisfied. Should the judge again lay upon the culprit what had already been paid, he would be unjust. Yes, and it is even so that we are saved through Jesus. "With his stripes we are healed." "Who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree." "That he might be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life." "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God."

The decision of the sinner then should be immediate and sincere and trustful, and he should confess, "I believe what God says, that he does what he promises, for he cannot deny himself (2 Tim. 2: 13), and if we

receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater (1 John 5: 9), and I accept the finished work of Jesus on the cross as a full atonement for my sins (1 Cor. 15: 3), and I will at once confess this fact before men (Rom. 10: 9, 10), and will from this time forth seek to know and do the will of God" (John 7: 17).

SYNOPSIS

(1) Every saved soul is a servant sent to rescue others from sin.

(2) To do this we must know the way of salvation as given in the Word of God.

(3) If we would be good workmen we must have the passages of Scripture ready for use.

(4) Salvation does not set aside the law of God, but fulfils the law and is in keeping with justice and holiness as well as mercy and love.

CHAPTER II

Wisdom Will Realize the Need of Soul Winning

More things could be said on this subject than any book could contain. Every issue of our religious publications, every book and tract, every church, every phase of religious work and interest all lead to this city of the soul, this capital of the empire, this throne of human existence. Methods must not be considered here. They are too often mistaken for principles and are too often made tests of faith and orthodoxy. Methods differ, and it is well for man that it is so, but we must not allow a question of method to hinder the most needed work the world has ever known. Salvation is to be found in none other than Jesus; and we are to bring men to him by night and by day, by personal and church work, by logic and tears, by law and love, by life and death. Such a glorious task demands our constant and our best endeavor. Many, many reasons might be given as to why this desire should possess our souls, and as to why we should enter the work, but only five of these are given in this chapter.

1. *If we would see men saved.* Men and women choose the physician's calling, and increasingly large numbers take up the duties and responsibilities and privileges of the trained nurse, not merely to make a living, but to be a blessing and to make a life. Their responsibility is great and the anxiety oftentimes is prolonged, but these only add to the challenge. A well-known physician said recently, when his efforts to save two lives had failed, that at such times he felt the responsibility to be more than he could bear, and that he must change his profession. The reply was, "Doctor, that is the feeling

of the men who stand as God's servants, and who try to rescue others from sin." We long to see men freed from slavery, we long to help the man who is sinking, and to convince every one who is being deceived. True, we are ourselves in the position of an apprentice (Phil. 3: 12-14), and are ourselves seeking to get hold of that for which God has gotten hold of us, but we must not wait until we have attained before we speak to others. We must call upon them to strive with us for that exalted prize belonging to the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus, and urge them to journey with us to the victorious life and to the land of promise.

2. *If we would follow God's plan.* Infinite wisdom is in it, and no mistake has been made. "Go home to thy friends" and tell them of God's dealings with you, and you, too, may be a blessing to "Ten Cities," as did the man in the country of the Gerasenes (Mark 5: 20). God has a message to send through us, and Satan will thwart that message if he can. Indeed, is it not likely that our Father permits Satan to do his utmost to hinder us, in order that our epistle to men may be written large and clear? As one has said, the deep shadows in the picture are just as essential to its perfecting as are the lighter and more attractive shades. Could we but know the Great Artist's plan in our lives, we would not murmur at his colors, be they light or dark. There are many kinds of work and many ways of doing it, but it is the same God, the same Spirit, who uses us all (1 Cor. 12: 6, 7).

3. *If we would be successful in life.* We do not win souls by talking only and by what is commonly known as personal work. This we should do, but we must make sure not to leave undone the life that wins. Like Philip we must not fail to "stick to" an opportunity for hand-to-hand endeavor (Acts 8: 29). We may, as Stephen did, win some Saul of Tarsus by a Christian death. Who that has seen it can forget the picture of the stoning of Stephen? There stands Saul of Tarsus with the lines

of conviction in his face; there kneels Stephen with forgiveness upon his lips, with glory on his countenance, with Christ in his heart, with heaven in his soul, and beneath is written: "Had Stephen never prayed, Paul had never preached." It is the life, or the death, that gives power to the words, even as it is the water in the reservoir that gives force to the spigot or the hydrant. It is the passion for souls that will make us willing to die daily if only we may by all means save some.

4. *If we would be like Christ.* The world will soon be able to discover us if we have been with Jesus, even the enemies of Christ will recognize us (Acts 4: 13). Our Lord came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19: 10), and if we would be like him in mission, in motive, in life, this same work will be our work. It will be our desire when we pray and when we preach, when we work and when we rest, when we talk and when we sing. A little girl in a Louisville church at a cottage prayer meeting was telling her experience. Simply and briefly she gave it. She said that once at the church, when the tenor singer was telling in song of "The Ninety and Nine," she felt herself to be the little sheep that was lost, and for whom Jesus was seeking. If we sing to win souls, God will bless the song, and some soul will thank God for the message of salvation which we were permitted to bring.

Mr. W. C. Pearce tells of spending the night with a farmer. The evening was balmy, but a cold sleet and storm came in the later hours. He saw the flash across his room of the lantern light as the shepherd went out after his sheep and his lambs. The visitor was asleep again, and knew not of the night's work. In the morning he went out to the barn to find the shepherd. His hands were torn and bleeding, his clothes soaked and muddy, his hair unkempt and wet, his face bespattered and haggard. When asked about his lambs and his sheep, there was a heavenly light in his smile, and one could see that he counted not the cold or the rain or

the work or the bleeding hands as of any importance in comparison, when he said: "I got them all. I did not lose a single one."

A young woman heard the call of the Master to go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and compel the lost to come in to the feast. For years she had desired to be a missionary, and had prayed that she might do such work in foreign lands. One day a vision came to her and a voice said: "Sophie, where were you born?" "In Germany," was the reply. "Where are you now?" "In America." "Well, are you not a foreign missionary already?" The voice continued, "Who lives on the floor above you?" "A family of Swedes." "And who above them?" "Some Switzers." "Who in the rear?" "Italians." "And a block away?" "Some Chinese." "And you never said a word to these about my Son? Do you think I will send you thousands of miles to the foreign lands and to the heathen when you never cared enough for those at your own door to speak with them about their souls?" The hedges, the highways, the streets, the lanes, the poor, the deformed, the blind, the crippled are not far away from any of us, and yet there is room at the Father's table.

5. *If we would satisfy the deepest longing of the soul.* The Psalmist said, "No man cared for my soul." No soul near us ought to be able truthfully to make such a statement. It is a sin not to care. It is a sin, if we do care, not to manifest our concern. If we do care, and if we do make known our interest, it is a sin for us so to live that we shall be in the way of any who are being influenced by our example. The people were led to think about Jesus, and came where he was, not for his sake only, but because Lazarus who had been dead was now alive. We must not fail to persuade men toward Christ by living the risen life (John 11: 9). No seeming sacrifice can be considered which stands in the way of a positive and constructive and helpful Christian life. Many about us are longing for help, and are watching to see

if they can count on us. In a western city the author saw in a church auditorium this motto: "You are the best example of Christianity that somebody knows," and it has helped him in his purpose and in his endeavor to be so wise in word and life as to point that one "somebody" to Christ.

We must be wise. We must be ready. We must be trained for the work. We must be willing to make the sacrifice of selfish desires and luxuries. We must be good soldiers of the cross, and go into the struggle with faith and love and loyalty. Our boys and their devotion and victories in the great World War should ever be an example to us in our conquest of souls and in our warfare against the hosts of wickedness.

Sherwood Eddy, coming back from France and speaking in Boston, said: "I arrived at Chateau-Thierry at the time of the great crisis. The French Army was being pressed back in a tangled mass, and automobile trucks had been assigned to the workers of the Young Men's Christian Association, Knights of Columbus, and Salvation Army, so that they might escape with the army. Paris was but an hour away. Defeat was in the air. The German flood was rolling on with typhoon ferocity. Then suddenly around the bend of the road came swarms of laughing boys. It seemed incredible. They poured a human flood, shouting, 'Come on, brothers. You're going the wrong way!' They were our boys; God bless them. The French were amazed as they swept by, and said, 'At last here is a line that holds!' They turned and followed them with wild cries. Ladies and gentlemen, I stood on the spot where the first American boy fell at Chateau-Thierry. He was an unknown American soldier, but beyond that spot the German hordes never came, and they never will! Since that day four months have gone, and our boys are still sweeping the enemy back. That spot where that unknown boy fell marks the turning of the tide."

SYNOPSIS

(1) Soul winning is needed because all are lost who have not trusted Jesus as Saviour.

(2) It is God's plan that each one who is saved shall join the ranks of soul winners.

(3) Any life is failing of its purpose when this supreme duty is declined or neglected.

(4) How unlike our Saviour we are if we are not joining with him in seeking the lost!

(5) If we are saved we long after others, and if we care for others we must not fail to let it be known.

CHAPTER III

Wisdom Will Make Soul Winning Life's First Business

There is another story similar to the one about Alexander the Great. Two brothers were traveling in a cold and frozen country. They were wrapped in furs, and yet they were cold. As they journeyed along they grew colder and colder. Finally, by the wayside they came to a poor traveler benumbed and perishing in the snow. One of the brothers said, "Let us stop and help him; we may save his life." The other said, "Are we not ourselves freezing in the cold? None but a fool would think of stopping on such a day as this. I would not think of throwing off my cloak to save a hundred travelers." "I am just as cold as you are," said the other brother, "but I cannot see this stranger perish. I must go to him." He did go, and worked on him until the man began to revive, and as the work succeeded he felt the warmth rise in his own body. Finally he took the man on his back and brought him to the vehicle and said: "Look, brother, I have saved this stranger's life, and also, I verily believe, my own. I am quite warm from the effort I have made." The brother did not answer. He was sitting there cold in death. In helping others to the warmth of the Christian life, we bring to ourselves the greatest safety and joy.

"Profit," "loss," "save," "exchange," "gain," these are the business terms which Jesus uses when he talks of the investment of a life, or the barter of a soul. The Christian who succeeds in getting a corner on all that the world may possess, and who thereby suffers damage in his soul, or the sinner who forfeits his eternal welfare

thus, has made a dreadfully bad bargain. Soul-saving work is not a picnic, or a luxury, but in the language of our Saviour it is a business enterprise of vast moment, and can be expressed only in terms of spiritual and eternal values.

1. *No business is so important.* The whole world, all the wealth, all the pleasures, all the honors, even could any man encompass them, would constitute a losing trade to him who forfeited his life in exchange. One trembles with sadness when he remembers those who have faced a less promising issue, and have turned aside from the bank of Christ to make their investments with Satan and Company, dealers in counterfeit futures. What a philanthropist is he who helps a lost and orphan soul! We give money to people in distress, we risk our lives to save a child from bodily harm, but he does more who rescues a soul. The first we ought to do, but all the more ought we to do the other also. A prominent attorney, known throughout the South, said a few days ago, when addressing a congregation of colored people, that if he were given the choice of being the greatest advocate in America's courts and of winning the greatest triumphs possible to his profession, or of winning one wanderer to God, he would say, "Lord, give me that soul as a star in my crown of rejoicing."

2. *No business can be conducted without capital.* Soul-winning is no exception. There must be lifeblood, there must be personality, there must be consecration of time and talent. A messenger and a message will put this business into operation. A wholesale merchant said a few days ago: "There are two things I know. I know I have been a great sinner, that I have gone deep into sin, have wandered many times since I professed Christ's name; and then I know he has forgiven me, that he is a great Saviour. 'I know whom I have believed.' " Blessed is the man who has this message, and who will tell it to his friends! A minister laid his hand upon the shoulder of a young man in a Baptist church as he for the first

time singled him out, and said, "Are you a Christian?" The conversation that followed made known to the minister that this young man had been in regular attendance upon his preaching for seven years, but was still unsaved. Five minutes of heart contact did what seven years of faithful preaching had not accomplished, but for which it had probably prepared the way.

3. *This business yields great returns.* Ten thousand per cent sometimes is the result, for a hundredfold is among the possibilities. He who leads Peter or the Eunuch to Christ may be saving a whole multiplication table, and he whose faithfulness starts the work of grace in some Saul of Tarsus is doing more in his death than in his life. He who writes a letter to an old friend may be leading an H. Clay Trumbull into the harvest field. The returns cannot be known in this life even as to numbers, and earth has no terms in which to express the infinite values. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." An ever living well of joy is in the heart of him who has had a fellow creature say, as a child said to the father: "When I see Jesus, I will tell him that it was you who led me to him, and told me how to be saved." Happy the parent who does not thus suffer another to take his crown!

4. *How good it is that this business enterprise is open to every child of God.* Each Christian has sufficient capital, and none of us is lacking in opportunities. All of us cannot preach, or lecture, or teach classes, or write books, but we may by personal work rescue the perishing. The minister mistakes his work if the membership of his church is only a field instead of being also a force, and the deacon has not yet discovered himself if his position is simply financial, mechanical, and ornamental. The teacher's business is not merely to smooth off the rough corners of some boy's character, or to be a martyr to his rudeness. The first step to winning that very boy

is to win his respect, and this may come if in a kind but firm way he is made to see that the privilege of remaining in the class depends upon good behavior. The first and most important business of every Christian, in the office, in the home, on the road, in the shop, everywhere, is to win souls. All of us should feel as the Gideons say: "We travel for God, and sell goods to make a living." What a firm we represent, what an honor to be members of such a house, to be laborers together with God!

At a junction of railroads a preacher was awating his train, and fell into conversation with a stranger. He soon found that his new frend had a hobby. It was a secret-hinge, a new invention, and the preacher was told with pride that the Pullman Company had just adopted it. The minister had a fine opportunity to tell of his hobby, of his discovery, and spoke of the hidden-hinge on which the Christian life turned, and urged his friend to adopt it in his life. The contract was there and then made with God, and though the result of that few minutes' talk is not fully known, yet it left a blessing in the heart of him who was in business for his Lord.

Once upon a time a prominent man planned to give a great dinner, and sent out invitations to a large number of people. When the time came and every preparation had been made, a servant was sent out to those who had been invited, saying, "Come, for everything is now ready." Then the very people who had seemingly been the ones most interested in the unusual event began to make all kinds of excuses for not coming. One man said: "I have no time to spare, for I have bought a field, and I am obliged to go and look at it." Another said: "I have something more important on hand, and I must ask that you have me excused. I have bought some oxen, and I must go and try them and see if I have been cheated." Still another made reply: "I just cannot come. It is impossible, I am just married and am not in the frame of mind to attend a feast, even if I were at liberty to do so."

When the servant came back and reported these evasive and puerile excuses, the owner of the house became angry and said to his servants, "Go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and the deformed and the blind and the lame." When this had been done the servants said, "Sir, your order has been obeyed, and still there is room." The master said: "Then go out into the cross roads and the hedge rows and compel the people to come in, so that there shall not be one seat which shall be unoccupied. I tell you that not one of those who were invited and who scorned the invitation sent them shall taste of my dinner."

Doctor Duff, who had been in India for a quarter of a century, and who had come home to die, was speaking to the General Assembly in Edinburgh. After he had spoken for a considerable time, he became exhausted and fainted away. He was carried from the place of meeting, and the doctors worked over him, until after some time he began to recover. When he came to realize where he was, he said, "I did not finish my speech; carry me back and let me finish it." They told him it would probably mean his death, and he said, "I will do it if I die." They took him back into the hall, and as the white-haired soldier of the cross was brought into the assembly the whole audience stood, and tears flowed freely as they looked upon the grand old veteran. With trembling voice he began speaking again, and said, "Fathers and mothers of Scotland, is it true that you have no more sons to send to India to work for the Lord Jesus Christ? When Queen Victoria wants men to volunteer for her army in India, you freely give your sons. You do not talk about their losing their health, and about the trying climate, but when the Lord Jesus is calling for laborers, Scotland is saying, 'We have no more sons to give.'" Turning to the president of the assembly he said, "Mr. Moderator, if it is true that Scotland has no more sons to give to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ in India, although I have lost my health in that land

and have come home to die, if there are none who will go and tell those heathen of Christ, then I will be off tomorrow to let them know that there is one old Scotchman who is ready to give his life for them." Soul winning is life's first business, and we should be willing to lay down our lives in India, in Africa, in China, in Russia, in America, if only men and women may be saved.

SYNOPSIS

(1) The Christian's ideal is to be like Jesus, but his business is to win souls.

(2) This business is the most important, yields the greatest returns, involves the heaviest losses.

(3) We cannot be God's partners in this divine enterprise if we are not willing to put something into it.

(4) Every saved soul is a partner with God and may be a sharer in the blessings and joys which are offered.

(5) He who thus seeks first the kingdom of God will find that everything else worth while has been added.

CHAPTER IV

Wisdom in Soul Winning Must Lead to Personal Preparation

Once when William Carey was very ill some one asked him if his sickness should prove fatal, what text he would prefer to have used at his funeral. His reply was: "I feel that such a poor sinful creature as I am is unworthy to have anything said about him, but if a funeral sermon should be preached, let it be the fifty-first Psalm and first verse." Chalmers also said of this Psalm: "It is the most deeply affecting of all the Psalms, and I am sure is the most applicable to me."

1. *David said in this wonderful statement of heart experience*: "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." When may we expect this? All Christians want to win souls. When may they expect to see this desire gratified? "S. S.," "Sinner Saved," was the degree which Huntingdon claimed, and that will be far more effective than any D.D., or M.A., in winning souls to our Lord. The man who has been in sorrow knows how to sympathize, and the one who has been rescued from some mine or pit will be most willing and eager to help rescue others. When will sinners be saved? Surely it will be when those who are God's own children make humble confession and come again to the joy of their salvation. Oriental despots in the time of David would have cared little for Uriah's fate, or for Bathsheba's shame, but David does not even suggest any excuse for his wrong. He confesses his transgression, his iniquity, his sin, his excesses and pollution and sinful state, and asks for mercy, and prays that God will wash the filthy garment clean,

that he will cleanse the diseased heart and blood of the virus of evil. He acknowledges his sinful act and his sinful state. He makes a confession which is humble and contrite and voluntary and trustful, not one which is extorted by fear and despair. His condition of heart as he now realizes it, calls for the multitude of infinite and tenderest mercies. A story is told of some drunken sailors who got into their boats to row to the ship after a night of debauchery. When the morning came they had made no progress, for the boat was still tied. We make no progress in soul winning when we are held by sin unconfessed, and when we are too much under the power of self-indulgence to realize that we are still slaves to that which is evil.

2. *The children of God must realize the sinful character of sin.* McCheyne once said that Christians who think themselves beyond the power of sin, had as well think that dry gunpowder could get the habit of being near fire and of resisting the spark. The soul is safe only when wet with the tears of repentance, only when the heart is guarded by the Holy Spirit and kept from danger by divine power. David said that he had sinned even in the very presence of God, even as the murderer who would stain the floor of the place of justice with blood, or the criminal who would add crime to crime in the presence of the judge himself.

David was awestruck at the discovery of his sinful nature, at the knowledge of the fountain of his life being so polluted. He had come of pure and noble parentage, he was a great and mighty king, but his nature was just as fallen as that of others of the human race. Against God, in the very presence of God, his sinful nature had shown its bent, and he realized that the Lord wanted purity and holiness in the inward parts, in the secret life. Sir Walter Raleigh, when about to lay his head upon the block, unappreciated as he was by an ungrateful country, was asked by the executioner if his head lay

right. Sir Walter said: "It matters little, my friend, how the head lies provided the heart is right."

The Psalmist prayed for a clean heart, for God to create in him that which he did not then possess, and also that a right spirit, a constant and steadfast spirit, be renewed within him. He wanted purity of heart, and not to be a whited sepulcher; he wanted holiness within, and not just to be as a dish washed on the outside. He wanted to be one whose life would be always acceptable and pleasing to God. Did you ever have a pump that was effective only when a bucket of water was poured in, and when vigorous work was kept up? A vessel of water was placed near, and this water would be poured in, and then the stream would come as long as the handle was kept going. Stop, if you dared, and there would be a gurgling sound, and then no more water could you get unless you followed the process just outlined. How much better to be an artesian Christian, with a constant, steadfast spirit!

3. *Souls will be won when saved people have the joy of salvation.* Pardon and purity precede joy. David's joy had been lost in the bitter sense of sin. Mary and Joseph found Jesus right where they lost him, in Jerusalem and about the Father's business. You and I will find our happiness right where we lost it. We need to go right back to the place where we neglected Jesus, and there we will find our joy. Samson regained his power when he renewed his vow, when he rededicated himself to Jehovah and to his service. We may have salvation and not be in the enjoyment of it, for we cannot maintain the life of power and consistency unless we be upheld by the Lord, by his free spirit. We are saved from danger, from wrath, from distress, from want, from despair by his presence and grace, but we cannot have peace and power while neglecting duty and compromising with sin.

Transgressors will be taught and sinners will be saved when Christians have restored to them the joy of

salvation. Then, too, will the sacrifices of those who are Christians be acceptable and well pleasing unto God. An old Hebrew parable tells of a poor penitent who came to worship, but had no offering. He told the man of God that a poor widow and her children came asking for food, and that he gave her the two pigeons which he had ready for sacrifice. "Why do you come, then?" "Because," was the reply, "I heard them singing in the temple, 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,' and I said: 'Will he not accept mine?'" The Levite lifted him up and blessed him, and assured him that his sacrifice was worth more than pigeons, or rams, or bullocks, or rivers of oil. Broken things are not usually valuable, but a broken heart is most pleasing and acceptable to God, and he will accept it and will make out of it one that is new and pure and true.

4. *Many Christians are not prepared to do personal work.* Some are not prepared who feel that they are, and some are prepared who feel that they are not. This is a spiritual work, and no man can plan the curriculum required in preparation for it. God has greatly honored the labors of those whom we would not have selected, while we have seen those who are gifted in the wisdom of men's words go through life with nothing but leaves. It is not by might nor by power, it is not by culture and oratory, but by the Spirit of God that souls may be won.

Still there are some things which we know to be used and honored of God, and which seem to be true of those who are successful, and without which failure seems sure. It is no light and frivolous work. It is worthy of our closest attention and preparation. If athletic games are worthy of attention, if the soldier must be drilled, if music and art deserve time and care, if business or social or political life require time and money and thought, how much and more should we consider prayerfully the work of laboring together with God?

5. *The parable of the friend coming at midnight* for bread is not only instructive as to prayer, but is also a

fine illustration of how to help a friend get the bread of life.

(1) *There must be the conviction that this friend needs the bread.* He is hungry and weary and cast down. The sinner in his journey is condemned, is hopeless, is lost, is dying. Already the sentence has been passed, even now the wrath of God abideth upon him (John 3: 36). The Christian friend knows this, knows that in this condition the sinner can never see life, knows he must believe on Jesus if his awful sentence is removed, knows that all the holiness and justice and power of God are of necessity against those who are not in Christ Jesus. No hell for the sinner means no work for the saint, but men and women are lost, and conviction as to this fact means that we are saved to save. An infidel once said to an intimate friend, "There is one thing that mars all the pleasure of my life." Said the other, "Indeed, what is that?" The infidel replied, "I am afraid the Bible is true. If I could show for certain that death is an eternal sleep, I should be happy; my joy would be complete, but here is the thorn that stings me. This is the sword that pierces my soul—if the Bible is true, I am lost forever." Surely no Christian can be indifferent who prayerfully meditates on the condition of the lost.

(2) *Out of this conviction there will come concern for the welfare of the needy friend,* even to the midnight intercession for help. Thank God for praying friends, and for hearts that wake at night with the burden of souls! Even the rich man became missionary in hell, but his concern for his brothers came too late, and so does that of some others. No man is properly prepared for soul winning until his heart's desire and prayer to God for men is that they may be saved—saved from something, saved for something, saved unto something. Two brothers, prosperous and energetic, had both become believers in Jesus, but had allowed business to absorb their time and attention. They knew their ownership in Jesus, but they did not know his ownership in them.

Typhoid fever took one of them away and the other went to the place of business to select clothes for burying the loved one. When these were placed on the end of the counter, the brother looked at them and said: "That is all he has gotten out of it,"—yes, all that he can use of the results of his toil and sacrifice. That night the living one said: "That is not all I am going to get out of it. My life shall not henceforth be given up to the things of this world," and he kept his vow, as many can testify. Concern, deep concern for the spiritual welfare of men—God help us to possess it daily and hourly!

(3) *The conviction and concern must keep company with confidence,* or despair will take the place of hope. We are not able to save, we have no bread to give, but we have a Friend who is able and can meet every need. He is able. Have faith in God; only believe, and he will help us over our unbelief. He is able to help us do the work. He is able to relieve the friend who is in want. He can speak the tender word and can reveal the horrors of sin. The pretending fig tree will wither at his word, and the winds and waves will obey his wish. The dumb spirit, which is too much for the disciples, must yield when he commands (Mark 11: 22-24; 9: 21-24). Feeble will be the prayer and hesitating the service, when he who intercedes for bread is doubtful as to the willingness or the ability of the Lord to give help. Many a poor old mother has held on to God and has held on to her boy, until at last the wayward child bowed his heart before the cross of Christ. Maybe we would have given him up and would have lost all confidence, but her faith was rewarded.

(4) *Constancy then seems to be another essential,* constancy in life, in desire, in prayer, in effort, until we stand at the door of opportunity for which we have been asking and seeking. Let us never tire in well-doing for at the proper season we shall reap, if we do not, because of the heat and the fatigue, lose heart and turn cowards (Gal. 6: 9). We must be constant upon worship, upon

prayer and meditation. We must be constant in the Word. None of these can be omitted without sustaining serious loss. He who has read his Bible and talked with God regularly, and then has had to miss one time, is astonished at the consciousness of loss. He misses it far more than the cup of coffee from the morning meal. One sees thus how stimulating to the soul life this bread of heaven is, and when it is neglected he finds that there is a corresponding loss of vigor and preparation for service. "Because of his importunity" is the secret of much of the success of soul winning, as well as of answer to prayer.

(5) *Courage is the final want of many* who are convinced and concerned and assured and constant. Courage to approach God requires consecrated desire; courage to approach man means willingness to sacrifice self in order to serve. It takes courage to go out as sheep amidst wolves (Matt. 10: 16), to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. "The Christian is like a diver who goes down into a world where conditions press about him to crush out his life. He is in that world for work, and yet he is not of it in fellowship. His life comes from above and he must have the connection unbroken and unceasing." It takes more courage to face an individual than an audience, and the devil takes the force out of many a Christian's life by making him excessively anxious about courtesy and tact. Mr. Trumbull was once visiting a seminary, and while waiting for the professor to be at leisure, fell into conversation with the janitor, and when the professor came the janitor was ready to enter the kingdom. Surely God will give to that worker "as many as he needeth," who fails not in conviction and concern and confidence and constancy and courage.

SYNOPSIS

(1) Sinners will be converted when the saved have the joy of salvation.

(2) Saints will be joyous when they realize their sin and come confessing with a contrite heart.

(3) Preparation for soul winning is not merely mechanical, but is vital and real and spiritual.

(4) As with the friend who came at midnight, there must be (a) realization of need, (b) concern for the needy, (c) confidence in God, (d) constancy of intercession, and (e) courage of endeavor.

CHAPTER V

Wisdom Will Not Neglect the Greatest Asset in Soul Winning

Wisdom will surely bring the worker to see the importance of prayer. Now abideth preaching, and working, and praying, but the greatest of these is praying. In soul winning we have many and valuable assets, such as buildings, equipment, numbers, finances, works, prestige, music, organization, all of which have some value, but all of them combined do not equal prayer. Yet, only too often prayer is the one talent which we wrap in clean and chaste language, lay away in good and orderly form, and bring back unused to our Lord. Those who really pray hold up the hands of every worker and warrior, and while they continue, the soldiers of the cross go forward to victory; but when they weaken and let fall their petitions, triumphs cease and the enemies prevail, and the churches lose the passion for souls.

Prayer is an attitude and an act. The act is dependent on the attitude, and the attitude shows itself in the act. Prayer is a delicate and fragrant and beautiful flower, which is marred when some rude and unsympathetic hand is laid upon it, but which charms and refreshes all who have the responsive heart. Prayer is a mirror which, when kept burnished and bright and free from the breath of the self-life, will give back to the beholder all that the one who prays can bring to its responsive face. Jesus prayed and told his disciples to pray, and even trained them in prayer, but he gave them no theory of prayer. We need practice, not theory, and the practice of prayer is the greatest asset possible to any individual or church or denomination.

1. *The soul winner will feel and know that prayer transcends every objection and difficulty.* In spite of every mental struggle and every suggestion of rationalism, the heart insists on praying. The heart has reasons that reason knows not of, and finds that cause and effect are not set aside, but are used to answer prayer. The higher cause for the greater effect is brought in, and spiritual results come because of divine power. Wireless messages do not break the laws of distance and traveling, for they employ the higher and greater laws of sound waves, of atmosphere, of concussion.

The unchanging God has not been taken from his throne, and he has not been led to alter his purposes, but in the atmosphere of prayer the unchanging love of God comes into its opportunity to bless. Harvests do not violate God's unchanging nature, but they are an appropriation of his unchanging power and law. The better we know these and the more earnestly we invoke them, the greater and richer the harvest. His plan is that we pray, and his plan is that if we do not pray we fail to win the lost, just as surely as the farmer has no harvest who fails to invoke the blessings of seed and soil and sunshine and shower.

God is good and will give anyhow, is the idea of some, and they forget that prayer is not just asking and getting, but that prayer is also fellowship and communion. How grieved we would be if our children never talked with us except when asking for something! The normal child talks with father and mother, appreciates the privileges of fellowship, and cooperates in the work of the home. Prayer is subjective as well as objective, is cooperative and is awakening, is unselfish and is self-revealing. Jesus prayed at his baptism, in the choice of his disciples in the wilderness, in preparing to meet his enemies, at the Transfiguration, in Gethsemane, on the cross, and he now intercedes at the throne. Surely we will not allow any mere skeptical theory to keep us from the blessings of grace. If we are wise we will pray

often and much, for our enemies are many and terrible, and the Christian must put on the whole armor of God and must see to it that the equipment does its best work by "praying always."

2. *Prayer is open to all, to anybody, at any time, and anywhere.* We may not be able to give thousands of dollars to wipe out great debts, and to endow hospitals, and to send out missionaries, and to erect church buildings; we cannot testify to everybody by the spoken word, and by the daily life and influence. It is impossible for any one person to work in every field in every land and city and village and community; but prayer can touch every field and every worker and every heart.

We may share in soul winning at home and abroad by praying. Anybody who is a child of God has access to the throne of grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. The door is not closed to the timid and the weak, though they may not be able to go to China, to India, to Armenia. They may do more for winning the world than someone who does go and who fails in the prayer life, because they give themselves to intelligent and intense prayer for the missionaries and for the native workers and for the lost. One great Christian man tells how he came to see that his chief business was ringing the prayer bell, and that in doing so God enabled him to send out and support one hundred and forty missionaries. When we call at the business office or at the home on the avenue, we may be turned away, but no doors can keep us from praying.

Prayer is possible at any time. By day and by night, Sunday or any other day, on land or sea, working or waiting, in the church or the office or the home, we may join others in the ministry of intercession. Sleepless hours in the night may be made glorious, and may be turned into hours of triumph by prayer. A journey to the mission fields may be made with special requests for the workers and their difficulties and temptations

and needs, and prayer in the night will bring songs in the night.

Anywhere we may pray. One of God's great noblemen says that in his pastoral visiting he has so many times wished for illuminated door-bells. He often had great difficulty in finding these bells so variously placed, but he said he rejoiced that the door-bell of prayer could always be found in the darkest night of sorrow or of need. A beloved physician gives this testimony: "I have resolved to pray more and to pray always, to pray in all places, and to know no street or passage in this city which may not witness that I have not forgotten God."

3. *Prayer enlists the best that is in us.* It is the highest attainment of the human soul, and is not to be reached at a bound. The ability to commune with him who is infinite in wisdom and power and grace and holiness demands the very best of which we are capable. We are told by Immanuel Kant that intellect and will and emotion make up our inner life, and he who prays needs the full exercise of all of these.

Perception of the finest distinctions between the true and the false, between the pretended and the genuine, between the Spirit of God and the spirits of evil, is necessary to real prayer. The intellect is made stronger in prayer, and is vitalized as it prays. The mind must be open and responsive, and alert, or God cannot enlist our best thinking. The Spirit needs intelligence through which to suggest to us the thoughts and the plans which will be most needed and appropriate, and also that he may lead us on to the best methods for accomplishing divine purposes. Prayer expands, widens, deepens, vitalizes, energizes the mind, and no prayer is at its best that is not intelligent as well as intense and genuine and definite.

Devotion is essential to the best, to the most real and effective praying. The affections, the emotions, the highest and purest and the most unselfish devotion are

required for this ministry of prayer. Barriers come into the mind, sacrifices become necessary, and only a devotion to that which is higher and better can enable us to choose wisely and well. Idols with which we are not willing to part, friends and loved ones dear to us, may stand between us and the crown, and unless there be a supreme affection for our Lord, we will lose the vision and turn away from the narrow path, and will be barren as soul winners.

Decision likewise is asked for its best when prayer is to be effective. He who knows how to pray must decide that the true character of man's highest work is spiritual, that only God can give this tone to life, that surrender must be made to him, and that in prayer truth is discovered to us. Only as we will to do his will, and as decision puts him first, may we expect to know. Through David Brainerd's praying thousands have been led to lives of greater devotion, and by him an influence was set in motion which grows and spreads and intensifies. His simple journal of prayer helped in winning to Christ and in giving to the world such men as William Carey and Robert Mims, McCheyne and Henry Martyn. Who can ever tell the extent of the life and work of the young man who, among the American Indians, found that prayer is the Christian worker's greatest asset?

In the records of nations as well as of churches and individuals this same thing is true. When in 1851 the Mohammedan Sultan signed the decree that all missionaries must leave Turkey, Dr. Hamlin said to his co-laborer: "Goodell, our life-work is a failure at the very start, for both British and American consuls say the edict of expulsion must prevail and we must go at once." His fellow-worker said in reply: "Hamlin, the Sultan of heaven can change this, let us appeal to him in prayer." They took the edict and opened it before God, and prayed, and continued to pray through the night and into the day. The Sultan of heaven and earth answered, the calamity was averted, and the edict was never enforced.

4. *Prayer connects the soul winner with the power-house of God.* The divine light and warmth and power are all about us, the great cables of God's eternal purposes and plans are laid, and yet many of us have failed to make connection in our own hearts and lives, or have not attached the globes and turned on the current. Light and heat and power will follow just as surely as we make the connection and see to it that there are no short circuits.

We miss our best opportunities for soul winning if we fail to pray. God's will and purpose and plan will become plain to those who pray and continue to pray and live the life of prayer. We cannot expect to discover and lay hold of that for which we have been laid hold of by our Lord unless we pray. The light of heaven upon God's Son, and the approval of heaven upon the death which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem, came as he prayed on the Mount of Transfiguration, and heavenly light will come to us, too, if we abide in him and pray to him. "We get no further and go no faster than we pray." "Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but is taking hold of God's willingness."

God's love warms our hearts and blesses our soul winning as we pray. As we discover his will and beauty and grace we love, and as we love his grace abounds toward us. His character is such that he will work with us as we pray. His world has been built with prayer in the plan, and his children are so constituted that they need and must have prayer. As God constructed the air for wireless, as he made the mind for thought, so he made the soul for prayer. No wonder our thinking becomes coldly intellectual, and our affections and emotions lose their purity and joy, when the soul is estranged from him who is the light and love of all things, and when we fail to see truth as it is and always must be in Christ Jesus.

God's power to save works through him who prays, and the praying Christian becomes the channel, the

atmosphere, the appliance through which divine power becomes effective. Prayer puts us in touch with the omnipotence of God. The conviction seizes us that no other power can meet the needs of lost souls, that no other can save them from their awful condition of sin, and then that God can use even poor, frail, weak human beings to accomplish supernatural results. He who prays will come to know by experience that power belongs to God to make salvation possible, to convict of sin, to begin the Christian life, to grow in grace, and to be a blessing to others.

Some time ago the writer sat next to a great worker in a gathering of Christian men, and when the name was called it came to mind that this was the man who had been saved because a traveling man prayed. The traveling man had a prayer list, and on that list he had written the names of his customers who were not Christians, and on the train and in the hotels and at home he gave himself to intercession for them. One of the trophies of his praying was S. M. Sayford, who became secretary of the Evangelistic Association of New England. It was S. M. Sayford who led C. K. Ober to Christ, and it was C. K. Ober who found John R. Mott at Cornell University struggling over the question of his work in life. The soul winner who prays will find God's great trophies, and will bless the world with rivers of saving grace.

5. *Prayer is equal to any and every emergency which the soul winner may meet.* No set of conditions, no peculiar circumstances can arise which are closed to the life of intercession, and what to us may seem to be crises are only God's times for emphasizing the need and efficacy of divine power. No individual emergency is too great or too small for his wisdom and help, and the best solution will come while in communion with God. A gospel singer spent a day in fasting and prayer in a Florida city, asking God to provide some way by which he could better fit himself for soul winning. The next day a tourist met him, and asked: "What can I do for you? I

have been troubled about you ever since yesterday." The singer, surprised at first, finally told of his day of waiting before God, of his lack of training due to opposition in his boyhood home, and of his longing to be more capable and efficient. That very day the money was in his hands, and he used his opportunity so well that many over the South rise up to bless his name.

The wise worker will know that every emergency of daily life also is included in God's program of prayer. Business and finances and methods and men are best when the prayer path is followed. God first, home second, business and other matters third will surely bring all things promised by the Lord. A Virginia business man was caught in the financial crisis. The banks could not let him have more money, and his wholesale hardware business was in a serious condition. This Baptist deacon laid the matter before God, believed help would come to those who tried to live and work for him, and went out on the road to visit the trade. On that very trip two men came and offered to lend him money, because they believed in him and were afraid to risk their savings with the banks. The business man's situation was met and the financial crisis solved.

Home will be sweeter and children will be an honor and a joy if they grow up in an atmosphere of prayer. It is no accident, says Mr. Babson, that by far the largest percentage of men of influence and power come from the preacher's home. We thank God that we came from homes of prayer. Will our children have the same occasion for gratitude? A true altar of prayer and a devils-aid-society cannot long abide together in the same home. One or the other must go. The divorce courts would grind slowly indeed if engagements and marriages were consummated only after earnest and genuine prayer. The dance hall, the theatre, the vice-filled movies, would not be attractive to young people who knew the purity and happiness of better things, and these institutions

would be popular only among those who love darkness rather than light.

Churches and denominations will find in their plans for winning the world to Christ, that their problems are solved and their treasuries supplied and their labors abundantly successful only as they pray. The 75 Million Campaign of Southern Baptists was born in prayer, its first difficulties were prayed through in the committee meetings in the Sunday school room of the First Baptist Church in Atlanta, its marvelous triumphs were made sacred by prayer, and subscriptions and payments and victories in the future will be in proportion to our faithful praying.

The soul winner will find that it costs to be a great prayer. It means much to be an intercessor, to really pray. Idols must go, worldliness must go, weights and hindrances must go, or the Christian worker will not win in the race for that glorious crown of reward which God alone can give. It costs to live aright, and the better one lives the more it costs. It costs to live in the land of prayer, and that one who would know its greatest joys must leave all and follow Jesus into the secret place, into the holy of holies. It cost Jesus to be an intercessor, and he who would join him in that blessed ministry must be one who lives the sacrificial life. It will help us in our soul winning work if we will remember that the call of Jesus was not for legions of angels to come to his aid, not for armies of men to fight, but for disciples who can pray and live and believe and witness. They are to look upon the dead ripe fields, and are to beseech the Lord of the harvest for laborers, for prayer moves God and moves us and moves the world.

Will we decide today to use this our greatest asset in soul winning, to be among God's intercessors, to turn aside from all that hinders, to live the consecrated life, to study God's Word as to prayer, to keep a list of those for whom we will wait before God, to study and to practice the ministry of intercession, to have a time

and place for regular and stated secret and family prayer, to pray everywhere and at all times lifting up holy hands unto God?

When a man is drafted into the army and is permitted to get a substitute, then the substitute must be from among those who are not subject to draft. In the case of prayer there can be no substitute. No one can take our place, for the Master calls us all. If we fail our place will be vacant, our part will be lacking, and no one can supply what we have kept back. God's call is upon all people everywhere. Then let us join the ranks of volunteers, and let us go forward in the spirit of privilege, not waiting for the draft to be made effective by sorrow and loss and pain. Let us join hands and hearts with Jesus and his disciples, with all who love him in sincerity and truth, and pray and pray and pray, until his Kingdom comes and his will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

SYNOPSIS

(1) Prayer is the greatest possible asset to one who would win souls to Christ.

(2) Prayer transcends every objection and every difficulty which may seem to be in the way.

(3) Prayer is open to anybody, at any time, and anywhere, if we be people who know how to talk with God.

(4) Prayer at its best calls for the keenest perception, the truest devotion, and the firmest decision.

(5) Prayer brings in God's power, and therefore is equal to any and every emergency that the soul winner may meet.

CHAPTER VI

Wisdom Will Find the Best Method in Soul Winning

Once upon a time a lad was in fearful distress of mind for about five years, because he knew himself to be a lost sinner and felt himself so undeserving that there could scarcely be any hope for him. The more he read the Bible the more alarming became the anger and wrath of God against sin, and the more hopeless he was of ever being accepted and saved. He attended all the places of worship in the town in which he lived, but somehow the message did not find him. One morning there was a snow storm, but he started to church anyhow, and finding it extremely difficult to get along he turned down a side street to a little out-of-the-way church. There were only a few people present, some twelve or fifteen. The pastor did not come, and some poor illiterate man went up into the pulpit to preach.

The man was really a stupid speaker, said the lad afterward, and had little ability of any kind. Probably for this reason he stuck the more closely to the text, and though he could not pronounce all of his words correctly, he just kept on repeating: "Look unto me all the ends of the earth." In brief, his sermon was somewhat as follows: "This is a very simple text indeed. It says 'Look.' Now that does not take a great deal of effort. It ain't lifting your foot or your finger, it is just 'look.' Well, a man need not go to college to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool and yet you can look. A man needn't be worth a thousand a year to look. Anybody can look; a child can look. But this is what the text says. Then it says: 'Look unto me.' Aye, many of

you are looking to yourselves. No use looking there. You'll never find comfort in yourselves. Some look to God the Father. No, look to him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says: 'Look unto me.' Some of you say: 'I must wait the Spirit's working.' You have no business with that just now. Look to CHRIST. It runs: 'Look unto me.' "

For ten minutes the man talked, saying, "Look unto me; I am sweating great drops of blood. Look unto me, I am hanging on the cross. Look! I am dead and buried. Look unto me, I rise again. Look unto me, I ascend, I am sitting on the Father's right hand. Oh, look to me! Look to me!" He saw the young man in the small audience and addressed himself to him and said: "Young man, you seem to be very miserable, and you always will be miserable—miserable in life and miserable in death, if you do not obey my text, but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved." Then he shouted in a great tone of voice: "Young man, look to Jesus Christ." The boy did look, and in that moment young Charles Spurgeon accepted the invitation to the great supper.

Our aim is to convince the mind, to convert the will, to win the heart. This, after all, is the final purpose of all our churches and plans. The purpose of our own salvation is that we should go and bring forth fruit, for we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for good works according to the plan of God (Eph. 2: 10). Such a work demands wisdom and training, and is worthy of our very best study. We do not need so much to pray for opportunities as for the ability and willingness to see them, and for the wisdom and grace to use them. No one can plead the lack of training, for our own experience is training enough to begin with, and every effort to win another is additional training. Neither can we excuse ourselves because of lack of wisdom, for God promises wisdom to him who asks it, giving to him freely, even though past gifts have been abused (James 1: 5).

1. *Preaching.* Naturally we think of this as the first method, for it hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, though not by foolish preaching, to save them that believe (1 Cor. 1: 21). This is not to be done in the church building only, but, as in Bible times, the preacher will turn the mountain side into a tabernacle, the street corner into a church, the well's curb into a pulpit, the upper room into a sanctuary, the boat for daily toil into a holy place, the sick room into an enquirer's meeting, the feasting table into a teacher's desk, the daily doings into sermon texts, the common places into illustrations of spiritual things, and everything, anywhere, at all times is made to do service in pointing men and women and children to God. What a privilege to be among those who are continually coming over the mountains as messengers of peace, and not with the feet of those shod for war and plunder and rapine.

2. *Teaching.* The day school, the Bible school, the professor's chair, give opportunities for great success in soul winning. What a privilege to teach some young Samuel how to get a message from God (1 Sam. 3: 9), and thus to pave the way for a great and useful life. That man or woman is blest who can lead the mind into fields of learning, and can at the same time win the confidence of a hungry heart and point it to Christ. Prof. Noah K. Davis was instrumental not only in showing young men how to think, but also how to love God, and every teacher who loves God ought to say of his pupils as Judah said of his young brother: "For how shall I go up to my father and the lad be not with me?" (Gen. 44: 34).

3. *Testimony.* By this is here meant the telling on occasions about how God has saved us. No more interesting or helpful talk is ever made than this, for then the people are hearing in the tongue of the lawyer, the merchant, the workman, the farmer, the drummer, the housekeeper, the drunkard, the gambler, the wonderful works of God (Acts 2: 11). The president of one of our greatest seminaries tells that it was the testimony of a

woman that led him to Christ. A young man, a foreigner, on the verge of ruin, was saved by the personal work and by the testimony of a speaker in a young people's prayer meeting. The leader of the Gideons, that very helpful organization for traveling men, was saved by hearing the testimony of a man whom he knew to have been as vile as himself, and whose salvation gave him courage to hope and then to trust. This method is commended by the threefold illustration in the cases of the testimony of John the Baptist, of Andrew, and of Philip (John 1: 35-51).

4. *Enquiry meetings.* More of the pastors would hold such "after-meetings" if they were sure of others to help them. It ought to be the exception to find a church which does not have constantly added to it those who are being saved from Sunday to Sunday. The members who offer themselves for such work will not only help toward the constant revival, and will not only bring joy to themselves, but will be obeying a plain command of God to fit themselves for their work in such a way as not to be ashamed, cutting the cloth to fit each case they meet (2 Tim. 2: 15). An evangelist of experience tells that the meeting which does not need to be worked up and which is most fruitful in visible results, is the one in which there had been in training and prayer for weeks a class of personal workers. In one such revival hundreds were led to Christ, and the community and the church took on new life, and the pastor thanks God until this day for the mighty power that was manifest.

5. *Home meetings.* "Cottage prayer meetings" have been singularly fruitful in the salvation of the lost. Possibly every one of us can remember remarkable visitations which have come to us, when in company with a few others we have gathered for praise and prayer and testimony. Here we have had the upper room experience and here many a doubting Thomas has cried out: "My Lord and my God." In a great evangelistic campaign in Louisville, Kentucky, no one thing did more

than these home meetings to awaken a real interest in the lost and in the efforts to reach them. Here many a palsied soul heard Jesus speak the word of cheer, and went forth a new man to the joy of his friends who brought him, and to the wonder of the critical world (Mark 2: 1).

6. *Letters.* Christians and churches do not use the mails and the printed page as much as they ought. Paul (Gal. 6: 11) did possibly his best work and most lasting with his pen. The winning of so many notable cases to Christ by personal letters from friends ought to encourage us prayerfully to put down on paper our longing to see our friends saved. Pour out your soul in a letter, and enclose a good evangelistic tract, and pray for God's blessing. Such a plan could be used by those too busy to get out in the week, and for those who think themselves too timid to speak to others face to face. Using this method will help the teacher in enlisting and winning the children, and will offer to the shut-in boundless opportunities of work in Jesus' name.

7. *Face to face.* Why is it that we fail in this? Why do we resist the leadings of God's Spirit to go like Philip and glue ourselves to this chariot and to "stick to" this soul until he is won to Christ? (Acts 8: 29). Possibly because we do not realize that when God sends us on such a mission he has been preparing the eunuch to receive us; or possibly because we do not see that God was making a providential opportunity out of what might have seemed to be an accident. As in the case of the eunuch he was sending us toward the meeting place at the same time that he was bringing the eager soul from Jerusalem. The chance coming together with our unsaved friend or with the stranger is a God-given opportunity. Sometimes the voice fails and the tears flow and the task seems bunglingly done, but the chords that were broken will vibrate once more, because touched by a loving hand.

8. *Consecrated living.* Many discouraged Christians will find welcome on the other side by those who have

seen their good works and who have thus been led to glorify God (Matt. 5: 16). It is the will of God that by a consistent Christian life we should put a muzzle on the agnosticism of unthinking men (1 Peter 2: 15). Sermons in shoes are constantly preaching, and the "gospel according to you" is being constantly and critically read. Of course it is a mistake for the world to judge of Christianity by us until God has completed his work in us, even as we judge no workman by the unfinished product. Yet the world has no other way of seeing what Jesus can do for sin-sick souls. God has entrusted us with bearing the fruit, for we are the branches. Let us so live that we shall be able to say to others: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."

Do we recall the stirring story of the execution of Captain John Paton, who had been apprehended, and was being taken to Edinburgh for trial and for execution? On the way he met an old comrade in arms, with whom he had fought under Gustavus Adolphus. His comrade was surprised and grieved to see him bound. "I will write to the king and get a pardon for you," he said. Paton replied, "Ah, you won't get one for me." "Well," answered his friend, "if I do not, I will never draw a sword for his majesty again." So he made intercession for the Covenanter captain and the pardon was granted. It arrived in Edinburgh in time, but was held back by the wicked lords until Paton went to the scaffold. Commenting on this a writer says, "We brand this as a most heinous crime and we do well so to do, but what better is the man or woman who receives the divine message of peace and who refuses to pass on that message of pardon to those who may be delivered thereby from the penalty of their sin?"

SYNOPSIS

(1) The call of God is to look, look unto the Saviour who was lifted up for our salvation.

(2) Preaching and teaching and testimony offer us opportunities for giving the message of the gospel.

(3) Cottage and home and enquiry meetings furnish the personal contacts which can be wisely used for work.

(4) Personal letters and visits and exemplary living are never forgotten by those who are seeking for soul-satisfaction.

CHAPTER VII

Wisdom Will Carefully Examine the Motives in Soul Winning

An arctic explorer thought he was making headway toward the North Pole at the rate of about ten miles a day, but found later that the ice field upon which he was traveling was drifting in the other direction at the rate of about twelve miles a day. By observing the sky, and by taking his bearings, he discovered the real state of affairs. Many people are making all sorts of excuses to Christ as to their duty to him, and they think their reasoning is plausible. A good look God-ward and taking their bearings from the Book will show them that they are being borne in the wrong direction by the motives which lie deeper than the excuses they make.

Many are the incentives to soul-winning which can readily be named, such as satisfaction, success, Christ-likeness, responsibility, reward, and the like, but one above all others is to be thought of here. More light comes from the sun than from a million stars, and that one sun is the source of all light. We need one sun to furnish our sky with light, one aim to enable us to simplify life, one love to move our hearts to service, one incentive to embrace all others. We need to get God's view, then we too will be interested in man's redemption, and we too will work and make sacrifices to rescue him from sin.

1. *God's value of man.* We will recall that man is "but little lower than God" (Psalm 8: 5), and that he has been made in God's image (Gen. 1: 26), that he is akin to God in his nature, that he has been given a position of authority, that he possesses in his soul possibili-

ties of purity and rectitude, and that he is to live forever. When we do not care for him, we must be radically wrong, or grossly ignorant of God's value of him. I hold my child to my heart and ask how much would buy him for a life of sin, for what would I sell him to Satan, and mathematics fails in its attempt to state the answer. Jesus in the fifteenth of Luke is justifying himself for his love for sinners, and is glad to be known as their friend. Though Pharisees and scribes may despise them, God and the angels in heaven are happy when even one of the wandering sheep is brought back into the fold, when one prodigal comes to himself and returns to his Father's home. If heaven so values the poor human wrecks, we should despise none who need him.

A boy once learned of a great and beautiful home which had been built and sustained by Christian people for the care of orphan children. He wanted so much to have a home and to have an opportunity to study and to fit himself for a happy and useful career, that he came to the orphanage and applied for admission. To the usual questions he made reply that he had no parents, no guardian, no friends, and knew nothing of any ancestry. "Then what recommendation have you to present? We do not take children in here without some one to commend them to our care." The little fellow made it known that his rags and his poverty were all he had. His reply admitted him, and when we hear of the great gospel supper we are told that the invitation is to those who feel their need and are willing to come.

2. *God's compassion for man.* God is concerned about us, and in the story of the prodigal son the compassionate father is the lesson to be learned even more than the returning prodigal and the envious brother. Jesus was moved with compassion for the distressed and scattered people, and said that the grain fields were dead ripe, and that the few laborers were insufficient (Matt. 9: 36-38). We are to be blamed when the grain is dying if we work only with a sickle, or stand idly by and do nothing, and

do not even pray for laborers. The great dailies recently published an extended account of the rescue of a cat in New York, which had been imprisoned between the walls of adjoining buildings. Humane societies are awake to the welfare of dogs and horses and birds, but alas! for our sons and daughters, our fathers and mothers! The killing of a buzzard deserves a fine, but to some the slaughter of souls seems to be of small concern. Yes, even in our day, men cry out in their hopelessness that no man cares for them.

The crepe was on the door, the little white coffin was in its place in the parlor, and the flower messages of sympathy were everywhere. Upstairs was a heart-broken young mother hovering between life and death, with skilled physician and nurse attending, and with loved ones watching and waiting anxiously. Slowly the strength returned, and one day the pastor sat by the bedside seeking to give comfort, hoping to deepen the desire to live, and lead to a surrender of the wounded heart to the Master. "I don't see how God could take my baby," said the mother, "if he is good, if he loves me." The pastor said: "If you feel that way I am glad you told me, for maybe I can help you. Of two things I am perfectly sure. One is that God has done the best thing for the child, and the other is that he has done the best thing for you." She replied, "How can it be best? Why should he take my child? How can he love me and do a thing that hurts and disappoints me so?"

The pastor said: "I have already lived long enough to find out that some parents have had their own way, and then in later years have discovered that their way was not best, and that death would have been far more to be desired. Then maybe you have heard the story of the shepherd who picks up and carries the lamb across the stream and up the hillside, in order that the mother sheep may follow to that richer pasture up there." Realizing that God seemed to be pressing home the lesson, and longing that both the father and the mother should

become followers of Jesus, the minister thought he saw an opportunity for leading the listener on to a trust in God. So he spoke of how often a parent must do things which the child cannot understand, even though explained in clear language. The pastor said, referring to the husband, "You don't believe that Mr. W——— would wilfully and maliciously do anything to wrong you, do you?" "No," said she, "I know he would not." This was said with vigor. "Well," said the pastor, "I am just as sure of God's love, and that he would do nothing that was not for your good." Following up this point, the minister said: "When you first met Mr. W——— it was possibly only a chance acquaintance, but as you came to know him better, you discovered that he was a good man and true. Your faith deepened by being well placed until love came as a precious fruit; and then love, satisfied and growing, brought confidence; and now you have an assurance that can say, 'I know he would not do me wrong.' Even so, I am just as sure of God's love. When first I met God at my mother's knee I knew little of him, but the more I heard and read and saw, the more my faith took hold of his character and promises. Faith soon grew into love, until one day I was ready and willing to put all in his hands, and said:

> "Here, Lord, I give myself to thee,
> 'Tis all that I can do."

"My faith and love were not misplaced. In every instance he has proved himself worthy, until now peace has come, and assurance and confidence, so that I can sit here today and say to you, 'I know God well enough to be sure that he will not, cannot do wrong.' "

The light seemed to be breaking with warm, cheering ray. The minister knelt to pray, and asked that this mother, who had lost her only baby boy, might realize that God, who had given his only Son to die the shameful death for us, would surely withhold nothing from us which could be for our good. There were only a few

minutes of Spirit-led prayer, but when the pastor arose the heart of rebellion seemed gone, and the eyes and cheeks were wet with tears of trembling trust. Her confidence seemed to deepen with the days, and soon in the church services she became one of the most helpful and sympathetic listeners.

3. *God's desire for man.* Our Father is not content that man should be rescued merely, that he should escape hell, but has for him an exalted ambition, even that he should be conformed to the image of his Son (Rom. 8: 29). God did not give Jesus into the world to make the condemnation of the world just, but that the world through him might be happy and useful and righteous. It is not simply that we may have life and merely breathe, but that we may be buoyant and have life in abundance. A soul saved? Yes, but we want to save the life too. Wonderfully suggestive is that painting by Murillo in which the monk, called to die while writing his autobiography, sought and obtained permission to return and finish. The picture represents him as seated again in his cell, intent on his unfinished task. Happy is that Christian who so orders his life as not to wish at its close to go back and change. God grant that the yesterdays may bring with them no regret!

It was God who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and who has entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5: 19), and it was "the promise of the Father" which came on the day of Pentecost (Luke 24: 49). The gift of God is eternal life, and we with Paul exclaim, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" (2 Cor. 9: 15).

"Did Christ o'er sinners weep,
And shall our cheeks be dry,
Let floods of penitential grief
Burst forth from every eye.

"The Son of God in tears
The wondering angels see;
Be thou astonished, O my soul;
He shed those tears for thee."

An earnest worker once told the author of his conversion, and said that the pastor was much concerned for him as a boy in the Bible school, and that he, anxious to dodge the issue, would have absented himself, had it not been for a firm hand at home. Finally he was in the pastor's study to talk with him, and when asked later to kneel in prayer he slipped out of the room, and as he looked back from the door he saw the man of God on his knees. On the way home that picture of the pastor praying for him broke down the stubborn will, and he fell on his knees beside a tree and asked God to have mercy upon him.

4. *God's estimate of man's need.* "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." How could he love us, and how could he give his Son to die for the ungodly? The only satisfying answer is that he knew our need, and being the God of love and mercy he was moved with pity and compassion and gave his best for us. If we are lost, it will be in spite of divine love and grace and effort. It will be because of our unbelief and sin and ingratitude and rebellion and selfishness. How sinful and depraved and ungrateful we would be if we closed the door of our home in the face of mother and father!

Imagine a man standing at an upstairs window, and seeing his old father being brought to his door by the help of friends. He knew the father was coming, but deliberately planned not to be at the railway station to welcome him. As he sees the group approaching he turns and speaks to a boy nearby, saying, "Go down there and tell that man he can't come in here." The boy hurries down the steps, opens the door, and seeing who it is, hesitates, stammers, and finally delivers his message and hurries back to report. He says, "Why father, it is grandfather, and he says you don't know who it is." The man then goes to the door himself, and insistently says, "No, you can't come in here." "Do you mean it?" asks the father. The reply is ugly again, "Yes, I mean

exactly that." The father still entreats, and says, "I have come a long distance to visit you, and you surely remember the care given you from the time of your infancy. Do you mean to turn me from your door?" For reply the ungrateful son closes the door in his father's face, and the aged man, stricken in body and in heart, and shedding tears of disappointment, turns sadly away, ministered to by others.

The son might be honest as to his earthly obligations, he might be a good neighbor and a helpful citizen, he might be a kind and indulgent husband and father, but he would be in the eyes of all people the most wicked of men. His best friend would be compelled to say to him, "You may be honest and kind and generous and clean and moral, but any man who will turn his old father from his door is mean and wicked, it matters not what else he may do or not do." God knows the wickedness of the heart, and the sinfulness of the life is open before him. He realizes our need and our hopeless and helpless condition, and in his mercy and grace makes provision for our salvation. One night in a Virginia city a physician heard from the gutter of the wet street the cry of a baby. It was in the days of the open saloon, and the father had come home drunk, and in his anger because of the baby's crying had kicked it down the stairway and into the street. The doctor, coming along about that time, took the little thing to the hospital, and the story of the awful crime and the now worse than helpless baby was published in the daily paper. A good woman went to the authorities and asked that the child be given to her, promising to care for it as if it were her very own. When this became known to her friends they were amazed and remonstrated, and asked why a woman of her position and wealth and culture should ask for that poor little thing with a broken back. Her answer was in keeping with the love of God who saw our need and had compassion on us, for she said, "I do not ask for the baby because I need it, but because it needs me."

SYNOPSIS

(1) The soul winner needs first of all to get God's view of sin and salvation.

(2) The value of man, of even one soul, has never been put into any mathematical statement.

(3) Do we have compassion for souls, that will point them with confidence to God and say, "I know whom I have believed"?

(4) God's estimate of man's need enlists his love, and our hearts will be enlisted only as we get the divine vision.

CHAPTER VIII

Wisdom Will See That the Worker Is Equipped for Soul Winning

The longing of every Christian is to win some one else to Christ, and the cry of each saved soul is, "How can I bring others to know my Redeemer?" We do not need so much to create such a desire, for if we are born again it is there already, but we do need to awaken it and keep it awake. Because of a conscious lack of fitness, or of preparation, the parents depend upon the teacher and the teacher looks to the pastor and the pastor longs for an evangelist.

We ought to remember constantly that the work is one. There are distributions of gifts, but the same Spirit and every gift is a part of the one great plan. Seldom if ever does some one person lead a soul to Christ. The influence, the teaching, the life, the conversion, the writings, the prayers of others have been preparing the way, and some one has had the privilege of making the last appeal, saying the last word and seeing the decision made. Christ is the head, and we are the body, and all together we are carrying out the activities of our Lord. Blessed is that Christian who counts his life and work a part of God's great plan for the redemption of a lost world! The equipment needed for this is simple, and is possible to every believer.

1. *Have the mind of Christ Jesus.* There are two kinds of Christians, those who seek their own, claim their rights, guard their dignity and demand recognition, and those who count these things unworthy of contention and of grasping after, surrendering their rights, emptying themselves, and taking a lower place if only thereby they may bring to pass the day when all shall

bow at the name of Jesus. The self-seeker will not be a soul winner. Men are not impressed by some sentimental, sickly, hypocritical, pietistic affectation, but a genuine, sturdy, abiding godliness, and such a life of devotion, of consideration, of consistency will be a constant and increasingly powerful appeal to the unsaved. Sometimes we think that to have "the mind of Christ" is enough and requires no spoken word, but such a life should not go speechless, because its silence will be misunderstood, and because every word from a consistent life comes with added and peculiar power. It is the consecrated and earnest follower who has the right and the obligation to speak. John the Baptist would have been a man of power under any circumstances, but when he put his heart and life and conviction and message into speech, he became "a voice" mighty and blessed.

Henry IV, when leading in the battle of Ivry, said to his men: "My children, when you lose sight of your colors rally to my plume." It is told also of a Highland chief, that when he fell and when his clan, thinking him slain, began to waver, the fallen leader raised himself on his elbow and said: "My children, I am not dead. I am looking at you." His presence and his words turned defeat into victory. A famous preacher tells of himself that in his study he kept a portrait of Henry Martyn, and that the eyes followed him wherever he went in the room, and that to him the picture kept saying: "Be earnest; be earnest; don't trifle." The minister says that his heart would reply: "Yes, I will be in earnest; I will, I will be in earnest; I will not trifle, for souls are perishing and Jesus is to be glorified."

2. *Manifest the earnestness of Paul.* The world opens its eyes with interest at anything which displays life and power. Paul became so in earnest that for him to live was Christ. At least one for whose salvation he sought made the assertion that this great Christian worker was beside himself. Jesus was so anxious to save men that they said he had a devil. We shall be

most useful when our experience and devotion and affliction work in us for the conviction and consolation and salvation of others (2 Cor. 1: 5, 6). The unsaved are moved not by attitude only but also by action, and as the love of God for the lost world won us, even so we must love if we would win others.

Some of us have seen in Virginia the beautiful statue of General Lee mounted on his faithful horse. It is a noble tribute to a noble man, a wonderful man. Some of us have been in the room in Lexington, at Washington and Lee University, where everything is kept as it was when General Lee left it. This is a tender sentiment, but somehow we do not fancy the changeless room or the motionless rider. We love to think rather of the glorious warrior moving and animating his soldiers, and of the matchless teacher shaping and inspiring the minds and characters of his students. The unsaved are not attracted by mere sentiment and attitude, but by that love and loyalty that produces the moving, acting, fighting, conquering, inspiring, living church and Christian.

As Paul did, so must we keep Christ and him crucified as our one aim and ideal, for his cross is our hope, and is the very heart of the gospel, and through the cross there is deliverance from sin. He made all things and it is in him that all things hold together. It has pleased God that in Jesus should dwell all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and it is in him that we are able to see and know and love and obey God. The Rospiglioso mirror in the art gallery in Rome is so placed beneath Guido Reni's great painting, "The Aurora," that you can sit down before it as at a table and enjoy the fresco above you. If you seek to gaze at the lofty ceiling, your effort produces pain and dizziness, and you cannot examine the figures carefully, or for any length of time. So we, by keeping Jesus in view, may behold the beauty and glory of salvation's Aurora, and may do so constantly and with great joy to ourselves.

3. *Use the Word of God.* We are not seeking some new invention, which can turn out so many machine-made members in a given time. Plans must be a secondary matter. What we desire and must do is to get the Word of God into the minds and into the hearts of the people, and when this has been done we can begin at that same Scripture and preach Jesus to them (Acts 8: 35), as Philip did to the eunuch. No Christian should be ignorant as to what the Bible says of sin and its consequences, as to repentance and faith, as to salvation and service, and this is within the reach of any of us. A poor man, a workman of very limited advantage, but a consecrated searcher of the Scriptures, is now an inspiration and help to one of the most cultured churches in our land. He loves God, he loves the Bible, he loves men, and God is using him far beyond anything he thinks possible. Every child of God should know these great things in his own experience, and should be able to point them out to any anxious and inquiring heart.

From the land of India there comes the story of a Hindu fakir who, with matted hair and ash-besmeared body, was sitting in deep meditation beneath a tree when he saw a torn leaf from a New Testament. The story is told that reading it, strange thoughts entered into his hungry soul—they seemed "to take him by the hand and lead him straight to the Father." He sought out a man to teach him of this wonderful Book, and his guide was an Englishman who wore a black band of crepe on his sleeve. Supposing it to be the mark of a Christian, he placed a similar one on his own arm, and later he wandered into a Christian church to hear its truths expounded. At the close of the service he announced that he, too, was a believer, and pointed to his crepe-bedecked arm in proof thereof, and when told that the band was an English sign of the death of some friend, the fakir thought a moment and then said: "I read in the Book that my loved One has died; so I shall wear it in memory of him." Later still he grasped the

idea of the resurrection, and then realized that his loved One was alive forevermore. Thereupon a great joy filled his heart, and the band on his arm henceforth became even more his sign of discipleship.

4. *Ask for the anointing of the Spirit.* The Scriptures tell us how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him (Acts 10: 38). If we would fulfil our mission in the world, then we, too, must have the Spirit of power, and we cannot be filled with the Spirit when we are filled with worldliness, and pride, and selfishness, controversy and such like. We cannot lift up Christ when we are all the time lifting up self or the world. Sometime, somehow, somewhere the Christian who would win lost souls must come to realize the desperate need of the Holy Spirit's power in his work, and must definitely, repeatedly, continually yield himself to the Holy Guest, who abides within, for sacrifice and service. Some of us even yet seem to be in the condition of those who had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost (Acts 19: 2), and to many of us the Spirit is the unknown God, and we are strangers to him as a person, as God, as advocate, as guest, as executive.

God commands that we be "filled in the Spirit," as if to say that the Spirit now envelops us as does the air about us, and we must open the lungs and be filled. He is around us as the sunshine, and we must throw open the windows and doors to his light and warmth and power. Then when we speak to men the Spirit will make the words quick and mighty, and the unsaved will feel that to reject our message is to insult God. A prisoner, hopeful of deliverance, was visited by a stranger who desired to talk to him about his past life and about his future. The visitor was treated very unkindly. Later the keeper asked the man how he and the governor got along. "The governor? Why, I thought he was a preacher!" He had rejected his only

opportunity of assuring the executive of his changed condition, and had insulted the only one who could pardon him. Let us so speak and so love as to lead the unbelieving to feel, that to fail in giving heed to the message is to reject and insult the Lord and Saviour.

When Jesus had manifested himself to his disciples by many infallible proofs, and when the time came for him to go back to his Father, he said that those who were to be his witnesses should wait until they were endued with power from on high. They had been living with Jesus, they had seen the need and the cost of salvation, they had realized their own responsibility, and now they are to wait in prayer and in rededication for the promised power. Saladin looked at Richard's sword and wondered that a blade so ordinary should have wrought such mighty deeds. Saladin soon learned that it was not merely the sword, but the arm of Richard which had done the work. So it was not by their might nor by their numbers and equipment, but by God's Spirit that the disciples were to succeed in advancing the kingdom.

One of our Baptist pastors relates an incident which shows how we may be led of the Spirit to do the unusual thing. He says: "The other evening, only a week or two ago, I sat in my own home, within two blocks of this place. I felt exactly as a man feels when he does not want to do anything else in this world but rest and have a good time. I had a good book and a comfortable chair and expected no company. I had been working with extreme vigor for a number of days and found myself very tired. As I settled myself for a comfortable evening, a still, gentle voice whispered in my own heart, 'This afternoon some one told you of a man and woman living within two blocks of you who are unsaved. Perhaps you had better go and see them.' At first I reasoned with the Master, but after awhile he had his way. I walked down the street, climbed a flight of stairs and knocked at a door which was opened by a man. I said: 'I am the pastor of the Baptist

Temple. You are my neighbor and I thought I would like to drop in for a friendly visit.' He was all flustered in a minute and expressed his pleasure at my calling. I had not been with him ten minutes before he told me that he had been waiting for a long, long time for some man to come and talk to him about Christ, and that other ministers in whose churches he had sat from time to time seemed to have no concern about him. Within thirty minutes he and his wife had both yielded themselves to Christ and were rejoicing in a heavenly salvation."

SYNOPSIS

(1) The mind of Christ is the primary equipment for the Christian worker.

(2) How can we know the facts as to sin and salvation and then be lacking in earnestness?

(3) The word of God is quick and powerful, and is the sword which the Holy Spirit is ready to use.

(4) Tarry in prayer and in heart-searching and in confession and in surrender until ye be endued with power from above.

CHAPTER IX

Wisdom Will Endeavor to Use Every Day for Soul Winning

Jesus not only gave us the "Sermon on the Mount," but he gave us also the life in the lowlands; Jesus not only showed his disciples the glory of the Mount of Transfiguration, but also led them to the valley of service, to the healing of the poor, possessed boy, to the life of sacrifice, to the death of the cross. It is most interesting to see that probably on the very same day in which our Lord gave those astonishing and authoritative teachings on the Mount he gave the word of healing for the centurion's servant, and that on "the day after" he gave life to the widow's son at Nain.

To us he gives the invitation to come, and to us he gives the command to go. One of the old painters used to keep near him some highly-colored stones, and said the reason he did so was because he worked so constantly among the pigments his eyes became less sensitive to true colors, and that he kept those stones near by in order to keep his seeing in tone. Jesus is our teacher and our example; he gives us our doctrines and shows us how to live; and he tells us what to do and then helps us to do it.

1. *Everyday soul winning is in accord with the New Testament plan,* and is after the example of Jesus and the early Christians. Our Lord, we are told, went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. Jesus is the soul winner's model, and he who would reach out the helping hand should study the Master. The Saviour always found the best way to solve each case. His compassion for the lost was not a passing sentiment, but was his life principle. Simply

and yet firmly he dealt with Nicodemus, the sincere enquirer; uncompromisingly he pointed out the one thing lacking for the moral young ruler; patiently he bore with and helped the gloomy Thomas, the honest critical doubter; gently he led out the dull and questioning Philip; faithfully he trained and taught the "sons of thunder," until they caught his own spirit; lovingly he warned and helped the self-confident and boastful Peter; challengingly he won the despised politician and tax-collector, and led him to be an office-holder in the kingdom. Jesus was always on the lookout for opportunities for service and for teaching, and in tactfully leading a Samaritan woman to a recognition of the Messiah he found more joy than in eating that which the disciples had found in the market places. Jesus preached on what we may call the set occasions, but his principle of everyday soul winning shone out constantly in such cases as the call of Matthew, the conversion of Zacchaeus, the healing of the man born blind, the sorrow over the rich young ruler, and in so many other wayside and day-by-day ministries.

This method is followed by the disciples. They find themselves impelled by the Master's parting charge, as well as by his example and by their own realization of the truths of the gospel and the shortness of time, to fill up each day with faithfulness. Peter and John come upon a man just outside the temple who needs a helping hand. The call for a visit to the home of the Roman captain at Caesarea does not go unheeded finally by the precise Jew. The impression that a special case is to be met calls for the breaking up of the campaign in Samaria, and Philip obeys and finds the Abyssinian official of high rank riding along in the nearest approach to an automobile which they had in that day, and finds him ready for some everyday soul winning. Thus in Jerusalem, Damascus, Caesarea, Samaria, Lydda, Joppa, Antioch, and all the country round about did the disciples do the work of soul winning. When

persecution came to the Jerusalem church, and its members were scattered in different directions, they went from place to place telling the old, old story. Paul, toward the close of his third missionary journey, sums up his method of work, as illustrated by his life in Ephesus, and says that for three years, night and day, he did not cease even with tears to warn those with whom he came in contact in the great city.

2. *Everyday soul winning is in keeping with the thought and method of our day* in business and social and political life. The old way of laying in a stock of goods and simply waiting for customers to come will mean failure. Men are employed to work the town trade. The grocer will send the delivery boy to take your order, or will call you over the telephone, and will send to your kitchen daily what you need. Every conceivable method of advertising is used, and inducement of every kind is employed to attract trade. Possibly some one may say, "Well, I do not believe that the church of God should do such things. It will detract from its dignity." Yes, maybe so, but it will add to its power. That Egyptian mummy over there in the Seminary Library at Louisville would lose much of its dignity were it to begin climbing up on its feet and walking about the rooms, and coming out on the street and entering the dining room, but there would be lively times around there if it should do so. Jesus said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The dead preacher, the dead church member, the dead organization is the one which does not possess any longer the seeking note. To seek, to seek, to seek, to seek! Do not forget that Jesus came to seek!

In a Texas city when a great church was preparing for a series of meetings, the pastor asked for volunteers to go over the city with notices and invitations. Among the number was a banker's wife, a woman of position, wealth, culture, and religion. Her visits brought a woman and her son to Christ, and two years later that

woman gave out the story of her despair, of her expectation to end her life, of the visit of this prominent woman, and of the decision to visit the meetings. The writer can see now her open-eyed wonder, and her struggle, and rejoices that Jesus saved her and changed her heart and life. This same cultured worker, this banker's wife, had great sorrow in her own heart and home because of the indifferent life of her companion; but when she went out to work for others God gave to her the loved one in the home, her husband for whom she had long prayed.

3. *Everyday soul winning is not confined to the ministry,* but is open to all classes of people. The laboring man can do this kind of evangelism, while he works beside his friend; the factory hand can have daily opportunities for personal work; the engineer can talk to his crew; the farmer to his helpers; the traveling salesman to his customers; the physician to his patients; the lawyer to his clients; the merchant to his employes; the teacher to his students; the housekeeper to her household; the children to their schoolmaster; the trained nurse to the sick; the parents to their children. We are all so placed that the opportunities for everyday evangelism are closed against no one of us.

A timid mother in a Virginia village was told by the pastor as he came into church that she should go that night and speak to her boy, one of that "model-boy" kind. The preacher had talked and prayed with him that very day in the study, but it seemed to have no effect, and when the pastor requested her to go and speak to her son, she replied: "I can't; if I were to go I would break down." To this the minister replied: "Well, Mrs. K———, I may be mistaken, but I think that is what he needs." During all the time that the evangelist was speaking there was a struggle going on in that mother's heart. The tears would come into her eyes and be crowded back, and her face wore the expression of deep sorrow and anxiety, and it is doubtful if she heard much of the sermon. As soon as the

invitation was given and the song began, she arose, turned from the seat, went along the aisle to the back of the church and into the pew where the son stood with a young lady friend. This must have made the task more difficult still. Placing her hand tenderly on his shoulder she did just what she said she would do, broke down and could not say a word, and stood for a minute or two by his side weeping and trying to recover her self-control sufficiently to speak to him of what he knew already to be in her heart. Finally she turned away, and came back down the aisle and did not know that he was following her. Her joy was greater even than her cross had been, and the last the writer knew of him he was living in keeping with the decision made that night.

4. *Everyday soul winning keeps one on the lookout for the opportunities* which are constantly appearing. Is it necessary to say again that we do not so much need to pray for opportunities for service, as to pray that God will give us the willingness to see the ones we have, and the grace and wisdom to use them as we should. This fact grows upon us with the years, and the more we study the Bible and the life of Jesus and his disciples, the more do we see that the plan of the kingdom is for every one of the builders on the walls of Zion to work, and to build on that part of the wall which is over against him.

The speaking with tongues is possible today. Maybe it will not be like the day of Pentecost, but by everyday evangelism each man will hear in his own tongue the wonderful works of God. The railroad man will talk to the railroad man in the tongue of railroad men, and we maybe cannot do that very well. The drunkard will tell the drunkard of God's power to save and keep the victim from drink, and many of us cannot do that so effectively, for we may have never known the life of a drunkard. A business man can tell his associates of God's blessings upon the business man who is

consecrated to his service. A mother and housekeeper can talk in the tongue of a woman who knows the trials of the monotonous, daily routine. A school girl can tell her friends of how the Lord can help her to be honest and true and how he will help her in study and in test.

One such girl came recently to ask advice as to what to do with a certificate which she had from the physician. She desired to escape a certain class, which she felt she could not master. She was sure this study would cause her to fail on examination, and would be the cause of losing her degree. She had asked the superintendent of schools to excuse her, but he had said he could not do so. The mother also interceded in her behalf, but the superintendent would not yield. The girl had gone to her physician and told him the facts, and he said: "Is it true that you are not able to take the study?" She said: "I am physically able, doctor." The physician gave her the certificate that she was not able to take the study, and she came to the pastor to know what to do with it. He asked a few questions, and then said: "Is the statement of the certificate true?" She said that it was not strictly true. "Then," said the pastor, "you had better fail honestly than to succeed and be dishonest. It would be a scar upon you for the rest of your life." She left the church saying that she would not present the certificate, that she would fail first. The next day the superintendent asked if she had the certificate, and she said that she did, and when asked if she would present it, said "No," and told him why. Christian man that he was, he said: "I will excuse you from that study." She came back radiant in face and happy in heart, because she had found that if we acknowledge God in all our ways he will direct our paths. Think how that girl can help another who needs to hear some one tell of the wonderful works of God in guiding and keeping his own.

5. *Everyday soul winning deepens the spiritual life* and calls for everyday religion. Such a purpose for life will do away with the professionalism which is one of the curses of the churches today, and will call for a deeply religious life embracing more than forty days in the year and will insist upon more than a mere Sunday formal observance. It will rid us of the feeling of Old Aunt Kate, the Negro cook, who said: "Nobody can live a Christian in a hotel kitchen. When I comes to work of a morning I hangs my religion on the fence, and gets it when I goes back at night."

In his first pastorate, while passing along the street, a minister observed a neighbor boy looking intently up into the air, and turned to see what was of so great interest to him. The lad was watching some pigeons. They flew along beautifully for a little while, and then suddenly with no seeming reason for doing so began to tumble toward the ground. They would recover themselves and start again, and fly all right for a time, and then tumble again. The pastor looked at the boy and said: "Frank, what kind of pigeon is that?" He replied: "They are tumblers, sir." "Tumblers?" Well, the minister did not tell Frank so, but he said to himself, "I have some of them. They are members in my church. The start off and fly beautifully while the revival is on, and until Mrs. Society invites them to a card party, and then down they tumble. Then they rise again, and seem to be all right until some real good play comes along with a first-class ballet attachment just to draw the crowd, and they tumble again."

6. *Everyday soul winning will relieve us of any responsibility for those who reject the Lord.* Listen! "When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and he turn not from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezek. 33: 8, 9).

Do we say that to speak to men of this matter is to turn them away, is to keep them from church, is to make them angry? All right, let it be so. We are responsible until we warn them and seek to win them, and then they, if they do not give heed, take the responsibility upon themselves. Otherwise, we are guilty.

7. *Everyday soul winning will impress the lost with the importance of accepting Christ and of doing so at once.* Do you believe that people are possessed of devils today? If you do you will come to the conclusion, when you begin working for souls, that the dumb devils have us in their power. Their name is legion. A woman in a Southern city was known as "Mrs. Talking W———," and how she could talk, until we wanted her to talk to souls, and then she just couldn't speak. In a Virginia meeting a preacher asked all who would promise to go out in the audience that night, and try to win some one, to come forward. Among those who came were two women so different in disposition that the pastor was greatly interested in the outcome at the night hour. One of them was so timid that she rarely said anything. With her times were either too hard to spend even an opinion, or she just could not shake off her timidity and backwardness. The other woman was just the opposite. If you went to her home, you did well to get a word in at all. When the evening service came and opportunity was given for personal work, the timid woman stepped quietly out into the aisle, and went back to a lady who boarded in her home. God blessed the personal touch, and the door of opportunity opened at her knock. The woman was happily converted. The other promise was broken, and the talkative woman came at the close of the service and said: "I just couldn't." Years later, during another meeting, the preacher was in this woman's home. In speaking with her four children, one daughter told him of her sinful life, and said she was far away from God, and another told him she feared that as a mother

blood-guiltiness was on her soul, while neither of the two sons was in the Lord's army, and one was almost drunk as he tried to talk to the visiting minister.

8. *Everyday evangelism is wonderfully blessed of God,* and brings an abundant harvest, and is abiding in its results. Observation of special meetings has convinced the author that the evangelist comes in as a harvest hand to help gather what the everyday workers have been sowing. One individual does not do all the sowing and reaping in the salvation of a soul. In almost every instance many workers share in the work. A minister in Tennessee said that when a boy he was riding in a stage from Morristown, Tennessee, to Asheville, North Carolina, with an elderly woman on her way home to die of tuberculosis. The boy's father was outside with the driver, and he and his little brother rode inside with this, the only other passenger. She gave them candy, told them stories, talked to them of Jesus, sang such songs as "There is rest for the weary." When outside of Asheville the driver with the long stage-horn had announced to the community that the end of their journey was near, she prayed with the boys, and asked them to promise that they would meet her in heaven. The minister said that he made the promise, that there was nothing else to do, but that in all his wayward years he could never get away from that promise. Long, long afterward, when many had done their part in keeping the question before him, he was attending revival services in a church in Morristown. The old sexton came back as if to fix the window near him, and did do something to it. He then turned and laid his hand on the young man's shoulder, and added his plea to the many which had been made before, and to him was given the joy of speaking the last word in that chain of everyday evangelists.

Once in speaking with a little woman in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, about her conversion, the pastor learned that her father and mother were infidels, and asked her how she came to be a Christian. She was

doing the work of a half-dozen in the destitute places of Louisville, and at the same time getting ready for the foreign field. Her husband was setting type on the *Louisville Herald,* taking a course in medicine and maintaining his place in his classes in the seminary. This good woman said that an invalid cousin led her to Christ, that the cousin was sitting in her invalid chair while the little friends played "hide and seek" behind the brick pillars in the basement of a state institution in Ohio. While others were playing, the story of Jesus was told her by the invalid cousin. It had never been heard before, because as a child she was not permitted to attend Christian services. She said that she cried nearly the whole night, at first because of her sin and the sufferings of the Saviour in her behalf, and then because of the joy of salvation. In the course of her remarks she referred to the fact that the parents of her invalid cousin were infidels also. "That is more interesting still," said the pastor. "Tell me how the invalid child became a Christian." Then the story was told of the humble servant in the family, of her faithfulness to her Lord, and how by an everyday evangelism she had won this little sufferer to the Saviour. The servant won the invalid child, the invalid child won her little cousin, the cousin became a great teacher, worker and soul winner, particularly among the colored people in Cincinnati, in Georgetown, in Louisville, and together with her consecrated husband she has gone as a missionary to lands across the sea, where they are in charge of a great Christian hospital, ministering to both body and soul.

SYNOPSIS

(1) If we follow the example and teachings of the New Testament we must be everyday workers.

(2) Today we are realizing afresh that the preachers are not the only ones who may win the lost.

(3) Everyday workers deepen their own spiritual life and free themselves from the blood of those who die in sin.

(4) The personal effort will impress the lost with their danger, and will bring blessings to the lost and to the saved.

CHAPTER X

Wisdom Will Follow the Example of Je;us in Soul Winning

Some years ago the late Horace Mann, the eminent educator, delivered an address at the opening of a reformatory for boys, and in this talk he remarked that if only one boy were saved from ruin, it would pay for all the cost, and care, and labor of establishing such an institution. In private conversation a gentleman rallied Mr. Mann upon his statement and said to him: "Did you not color that a little when you said that all that expense and labor would be repaid if it only saved one boy?" "Not if it were my boy," was the solemn and convincing reply.

Moved with compassion, as Jesus was for the lost, he always found the best way to reach the different cases. This compassion was not some cheap sentiment, but was his life principle. Remember again that in life, in preaching, in character, in work, and always Jesus is our example. In the work of winning souls, as in other things, we are most successful when we follow him. Let us take just one of the many examples in our Lord's life, that of the woman at the well, and see what kind of worker he was, and what we must be if we are to have the mind of Christ.

1. *He was a willing worker.* Wearied and seeking rest would be an excuse to many of us for being fretful and cross and idle, but Jesus found rest in doing the will of his Father (John 4: 6). The constant cry is, "Who then is willing?" Unwillingness is usually the first and last barrier to a real worker, and many of us have to begin by saying, "Lord, if I am not willing, at least I am willing

to be made willing." A timid little woman approached a young lady in a meeting in Virginia one night, and was treated so unkindly that she was in tears and was troubled greatly over her mistake. She was a stranger in the city, and left the next day still troubled over having said anything to the one who had manifested interest but who had so resented her effort to help. The very next night that young lady made a public profession of her faith in Jesus and came saying: "Please write and tell your wife how grieved I am at the way I did last night. I did not see until then how rebellious my heart was."

A wonderful picture painted by one holding membership in the Royal Academy tells a thrilling story of rescue work. It is a very simple little picture; a vessel upon the rocks in a tempestuous sea, and then a boat with two boys in it going to help. An old fisherman looked at the picture, and with a tearful face said: "That boat there—that is my boy." Then he told the story. He said: "That vessel went upon the rocks. All saw it and nobody knew what to do. It was a terrible storm. The sea was very high, and they felt that they couldn't do anything. Yet they could not bear to let the ship and the men go down without some effort to save, and they went out in that vessel you see there. They got up near, and they couldn't get any nearer. They knew no boat could live in that sea, and all they could do was just to stay there and watch the vessel going to pieces on the rocks. My boy couldn't stand it. He went to the captain and said: 'Captain, I'm going to save those men.' The captain said: 'Nelson, if you try, you will be drowned.' My boy said: 'Captain, I am not thinking of being drowned. I'm thinking of saving those men.' One of the men said: 'I'll go with you.' They went, and they saved every one of the men in the wreck, and my boy said to me after he got back: 'Father, it seemed to me as if the waves were smoother near us than they were

everywhere around.' And I said, 'Nelson, my boy, that is God.' "

2. *He was a watchful worker.* The opportunity came, and he was not blind to it. "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water" (John 4: 7), and Jesus used the one chance meeting for the glory of God. The world uses such occasions for business, for pleasure, for gain, for sin, and the Christian who is wise will use them for good. "O Opportunity, thy guilt is great," and sad is the day when a man like King Saul must say of himself, 'I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.' " Jesus weeps over Jerusalem's lost seasons of grace, and tells Chorazin and Bethsaida that their fate will be worse than that of Tyre and Sidon because of their unused opportunities, and we must not fail to enrich the passing and never-returning days which God gives us. We, as our Lord, as Philip, as Andrew, will do some of our most effective work at short range. Rome shortened her sword and conquered the world, and when we shorten ours we will win souls. "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day" (John 9: 4), and must not fail to buy up the opportunities that are on the market (Eph. 5: 16).

How near to us are openings for the most helpful service, and we should watch for them and listen for them. A Georgia paper tells us of a man in Atlanta who drank so much whiskey that in his delirium he wandered down town, possibly expecting to go to a drug store, or maybe to a doctor's office. It was night. He got within fifty steps of Five Points, and seems to have turned into an alley, thinking maybe that he was turning into a door. He went some steps down this dark alley and fell against a trash can. The snow and sleet soon covered his poisoned body, and he froze to death. The reporter says that one thousand people walked within ten steps of the poor dying man that night. Hundreds of automobiles rolled past him. He was within easy call of the great white way. There were maybe one hundred doors within a

block, that would have been opened to him and would have provided him food to eat and warmth for his frozen limbs, but he did not know how to tell these people that he was dying, and they were unaware that so near by was a scene to sicken the heart of humanity. Just so people are in need, are dying right near us in the alleys and lanes of our cities, and in the country places. We must discover them and bring them to the Great Physician.

3. *He was a humble worker.* "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" (John 4: 9.) She was a woman, a Samaritan woman, a woman of a bad reputation. Conventionalities stand as great barriers between God and the souls of men, but if we are going to be the slaves of society and of propriety, then we cannot be the slaves of Jesus, for no man can "be the slave of two masters" at the same time. Philip in approaching the rich man in his chariot had possibly a greater barrier to break down than if he had gone among the outcast. The most neglected classes are more often the highest and the lowest. One of our seminary professors, who was a member of a Louisville church, was for years interested in working for the wayward son of a poor widow. He gave prayer and sympathy and money and time and work, and when the young man was saved the old mother's heart could hardly wait for the time when she could tell the learned teacher of the answer to their prayers and the blessing upon their work. A young lady of culture, of proud family, found a lost girl, rescued her from a place and life of sin, brought her to the pastor's home, took her to her own room, taught her, prayed with her, divided her clothes with her, clung to her, saw her baptized on a profession of faith, and happily placed in a home of her own. "Go ye, therefore, into the highways" (Matt. 22: 9).

4. *He was a tactful worker.* What an example of tact was this! Beginning with a subject familiar to her, he

led from that to the things of God. What an example he was of the art of teaching! (John 4: 11.) There is not a principle urged today as essential to the best pedagogy of which he was not the master, and if we lack wisdom let us go to him for it. (James 1: 5.) He was not led into argument, and did not spend valuable time on things which were unimportant. He was courteous. He did not lose his temper. He was kind and sympathetic. He was intensely in earnest and had one object in view, and had the joy of winning the sinning one. If we once know the unfathomed joy of winning another for whom we have prayed and over whom we have shed many anxious tears, we will not lose opportunities by asking questions and by quibbling. This joy of soul winning will many times help us to turn from foolishly seeking to understand the origin of the storm rather than saving the man overboard, and from seeking to discover the origin of the fire before rescuing the inmates of the burning building. It is not necessary to understand the origin of fires, or the cause of storms, in order to be a life-saver. A loving heart and a willing hand and a clear head will do wonders.

5. *He was a faithful worker.* Sometimes we try to be too tactful. Let us use worms for bait, if that will catch the fish. Jesus told the woman of her wicked life (John 4: 16ff), and offered no compromise as to the sins which had brought her to the present sad condition. We make a mistake if we think that sinners are easiest won by condoning their sins. No, the lost man wants a remedy for the evil which he knows to be the curse of his life. He prefers to face it, and conquer it. In his own heart he knows he cannot hold on to sins wilfully and deliberately and find Jesus, and when we urge him to just come out, believe, confess, obey, he begins to give excuses, such as "Can't hold out," "Not tonight," "Don't feel like it," "Can't believe." He can't believe that Jesus will accept the wilfully wicked, for Jesus saves penitent sinners, and this man is clinging to sin and knows that no

compromise is possible. He can't believe that Jesus will save him in his present state of heart, and he needs a faithful worker who will show him his heart, his life, his sin, and who will tell him that the issue is on, and that he for some price is selling his Lord as much as Judas did for money. "Let the wicked forsake his way" (Isa. 55: 7).

6. *He was a happy worker.* "In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of" (John 4: 31, 32). Blessed is the man who has won a soul to Christ! A young man converted in the pastor's study in Bluefield, West Virginia, was so happy that he wept aloud in his joy. A few weeks after he came leading another young man to the Saviour, and said, "I don't know which is the greater happiness, to be saved myself or to help another find Christ." A young minister, now pastor in South Carolina, was greatly distressed because his Christian life was not joyous, but he tells that the first time he led another to become a Christian he had so much joy that he stopped his horse and got down by the roadside and prayed and rejoiced. Yes, he who turns a sinner from his way of error will save a soul from death, will realize the opportunity of being in Christ's stead, will in a new and real sense find that the Master is with him, and will see greater meaning in the "Well done, good and faithful servant."

7. *He was a successful worker.* The woman believed and through her influence many others came, and they said, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4: 39-42). God expects fruit, and so should we. We must not be content to be barren and unfruitful. Many a buried talent, hid away because it is only one, could start a stream of influence which would bless the world. The depth of vulgar sin had been fathomed by a sinning man, and yet he belonged to one of the best known and most respected families of his state. The worker's first

acquaintance with him was in a rescue mission where this man asked for prayer, and he and the worker were kneeling together asking God to forgive and to save. He was then under the influence of drink and was enslaved by a lust for which he excused himself, saying that he loved the woman and she loved him. For seven years he had not seen his wife, or his home, or his immediate relatives. He had again and again pawned his clothes and his watch for drink, only to recover them after his spree and then pawn them again. At times he would come to such degradation that with nothing else left to pawn, this son of a proud family would go down on Main Street to negro barrel houses and tap beer for the proprietors in order that he might get a taste of drink. In telling his friend these things, and others just as bad, he one day said, "You don't understand how I could get down so low, do you?" The friend replied: "No, I do not." "Well," said he, "it came about gradually. I went down step by step."

When this acquaintance began the doctors had said to him that he would either be dead or in the asylum in a few weeks, and he had begun to realize the awful wreck which sin had wrought, and had begun to see that he was receiving the promised wages. He was ready to trust God for help, was seeking mercy and pardon and power, was eager to take the first step in the Christian life. He had before him a long battle against old habits and against spiritual pride concerning any plan of help which might be made for him. There on his knees he called on God for mercy, and claimed salvation in Jesus' name. His confession was clear and satisfactory, and he entered earnestly upon the rescue of his brothers in sin, and found friends in his Christian life.

His was a proud and stubborn heart, and with returning respectability consequent upon his new life, he showed an unwillingness to be classed with the rescued outcasts, and began to absent himself from the meetings. Clean and comfortable quarters were now his, means for gratifying his wishes came to hand, other ways of spending

his evenings were chosen, and those who loved him began to fear for his safety. He boasted of his strength and told of how he had taken a flask of drink to his room, had opened it upon the table, and had gloried in his power to resist. The suspected results came, and he was down again, but he had fallen toward the cross; or, as one has said, like a rubber ball he fell bouncing. Humiliated, wiser, eager, confessing, he is on his knees again, and this time is more ready to strengthen his brethren.

Winning his way back to the confidence of his father and of his wife was slow and difficult work. In the days of debauchery he had so often disappointed them, had played false in so many ways, that they did not believe him sincere. One day as the pastor was leaving the room the man detained him, stepped over to his trunk, took from it a roll of money and said that it was from his father. Tossing the money into the trunk, he laid his arm on the pastor's shoulder, and burying his face in his elbow, said: "Hamilton, I don't want his money; I want his confidence." Gradually, with fidelity to his confession, confidence was restored. The wife came back to him, the father welcomed him, the church received him, and life and light and love grew brighter.

As with Jere McAuley the old self was not ready to surrender the territory so long held, and once more drink conquered. A hurried telephone call from the wife, and all other work is laid aside to seek again to help this soul so nearly lost forever. Pitiable sight! Shame covered man! Discouraged pastor! Weeping, sorrowful wife! The sermon for Sunday is not ready, the time presses, and yet this man must not be neglected and the ground gained must not be lost. The text already chosen for Sunday kept repeating itself: "Went about doing good," "Healing all that were oppressed of the devil."

With sweeter spirit, with keener sense of his own weakness, with a new consciousness of God's love, of the Saviour's compassion, of the Spirit's help, the penitent man

came forth to trust the risen and exalted Lord for power, for victory over sin. Progress now was more rapid, new ties were formed, new victories were won, new visions came, and he now seemed to enter upon real conquest of promised territory. Soon a little house was purchased, and husband and wife moved into a new residence section of the city. It was as if paradise had been regained when they left the cramped rooms downtown and went into their own home. When the pastor and his wife visited them, heard her expressions of gratitude and of renewed faith, and saw his pride in the little garden and in the improvements on the place, and saw the new life he was living, it was worth all the anxiety and praying and working.

A year later, after having moved to another field of labor, and returning for a visit, the pastor and his wife were eager to know how the redeemed drunkard and outcast was progressing. The opportunity to hear from him came when they met the well-dressed and peace-possessed wife on the street. There was no need to ask the question, and yet how delighted the old friends were at the confident way the answer came when she said: "Oh, I do know that I am the happiest woman in the world." Out of the depths of debauchery and drunkenness he had come, plucked as a brand from the burning, caught by the hand of the Saviour as he was tottering on the brink of despair. In the salvation and progress of this man, cursed by sin, of stubborn heart and will, enjoying and excusing his lust, there was manifested the power and grace and forbearance and perseverance of a God of love and compassion.

SYNOPSIS

(1) Our best work will be done when we seek to follow the example of Jesus.

(2) He was willing to use any opportunity, and was so watchful that he did not miss this one.

(3) The humble task, which required the greatest tact, showed how genuinely faithful Jesus was.

(4) The very joy of the worker made him all the more successful, and the same can be true of us.

CHAPTER XI

Wisdom Will Give Special Attention to the Winning of Children

Jesus loves children. Jesus would have us be interested in children. When our Saviour would teach his disciples about greatness in the kingdom, he called to his side a little child, and spoke words which his followers could not forget and which have been handed down through the centuries. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." In another place (Eph. 6: 4) God commands that the fathers provoke not their children to wrath, but rather that they nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. The writer is glad to recall, that the first time his boyish mind records having seen his father was on the way to Sunday school as he was being helped along the stepping stones across the muddy street.

"An angel paused in his onward flight
With the seed of love and truth and right,
And said, 'O where can this be sown
To bear the most when it's full grown;
To whom can this precious seed be given
To yield the most for earth and heaven?'
The Saviour answered and said with a smile,
'Plant it at once in the heart of a child.'"

1. *The children soon show conclusively that they have our same sinful nature.* The testimony of David was that he was brought forth in iniquity, and that he had inherited a depraved nature from his birth (Psalm 51: 5), and in Proverbs (20: 11) we are reminded of what

all have observed, that even a child makes himself known by his doings. All have sinned. All have failed of godlikeness. All have come short of the glorious perfection of Jehovah (Rom. 3: 23). Even a little baby soon manifests its selfishness, and its anger is quickly apparent if its desires are crossed. The keeper of the animals in one of our parks was explaining to the crowd why he was putting the lion's kitten in a cage. At first it had seemed to be playful and harmless, and he had taken it to his home for his children to enjoy, but on the day before it had begun to manifest its inherited nature, and he was afraid to take the risk any longer.

A little girl under conviction confessed how ugly she had been to her mother, "making faces" behind her back. A boy told that, angry because made to go after the milk, he picked up the kitten and put it in the bucket just for spite. Another confession was that sickness was only pretended, in order to keep from bringing in the kindling and coal for mother's fire. Another related with tears of repentance that things had been bought at the store for self without permission, and were charged to the family account. A young girl of the finest of families had stolen coins from her father's purse when he would go down in the morning to see after the furnace. One child was as conscious of a sinful encounter with Satan as was Martin Luther, and with horror reluctantly confessed the suggestion which had been made to him that he insult God by taking the bucket of slop and throwing it in God's face. If we think sin is not real to children, we just do not know them. A baby born of Chinese parents will inherit the characteristics peculiar to them. One born of Indian father and mother will partake of their nature. The child of African birth cannot escape the consequences. All who are descendants of Adam inherit the fallen nature of the race.

2. *Children are conscious earlier than most of us realize that they are lost.* They soon feel within their hearts the guilt of wrong desires, and the responsibility

for their sinful choices. Something within tells them that they are not morally blind, and that because they see, their sin remaineth (John 9: 41). As they come more and more to know the right, they feel that their failure to do good is added sin (James 4: 17). They realize increasingly that they are presenting themselves as servants of wrong (Rom. 6: 16), and that they are more and more the bondslaves of sin (John 8: 34). They resist the Holy Spirit as surely as do grown people (Acts 7: 51), and all too often resent most vigorously efforts which are made to bring them to Jesus (Matt. 12: 30). One young lad of tender years tells of how he and his boy companion talked of their sinful condition, and wished they had never been born. Neither one of them confessed his heart hunger to his parents. Had this been done the joy of salvation might have come much earlier.

A Baptist minister tells of how, when quite young, every thought of death brought terror to his soul. When refugees from the yellow fever came to his town, he was sure he would take the disease and would die and was lost. When the cholera plague started in at a city five hundred miles from him, there was the same consciousness of sin and the same fear of death without Christ. Another preacher tells of how he thought and dreaded and struggled. He would get down in the field as he worked along, and would pour out his child heart in prayer and longing. The wise preacher and teacher, the wise parents, will not forget their own experiences of youth, but will enter into the heart hunger of boys and girls who are daily hearing that monitor within which insistently says to them, "You ought," and "you ought not."

3. *Children are invited by the Saviour to come to him.* He was moved with indignation toward his disciples when they stood between him and the young folks, and said to them, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God" (Mark 10: 14). Surely no one of us would be

willing by any sort of coercion to drag young people into any outward connection with the church. We are not believers in proxy faith or in forced religious creeds and ordinances. It must be their own choice. They must repent and trust and obey. Just as surely on the other hand we are not willing to block their way. We must not forbid those who would come. We dare not fail to help them spiritually, just as really as we would if they were in physical danger.

When "God so loved the world," he surely did not exclude the little folks; and when the gospel "whosoever" rings forth, it cannot by any sort of interpretation leave out the child who wills to come (Rev. 22: 17). One man now relates that he lost twenty-two years of peace and of service because his father said to him, "John you go bact to your seat; you do not know what you are doing." A minster tells that for fifteen years he was ready to come, but that home folks forbade it. A young woman concerned as to her soul was told by her mother that she was not old enough. She was eighteen years of age, and had a position in a lawyer's office as stenographer, but did not have sense enough to trust and obey Jesus. If that were really true, then it should not be paraded, but should be the skeleton in the family closet.

4. *It is easier for us to come while we are children.* We must not be deceived, for the longer we continue in evil companionships the more corrupt will be our morals (1 Cor. 15: 33). The prophet urges that we seek Jehovah while he may be found, for there may come a time when he is not near (Isa. 55: 6). The evil days will all too often come, and the years draw nigh, when people will have no pleasure in divine impulses, if they do not remember their Creator in the days of their youth (Eccl. 12: 1). If we are often reproved, and refuse to give heed, the conscience becomes seared and the heart hardened. It is always a dangerous thing to refuse to obey light. It is a rare thing when a man or woman of many years in sin breaks the chains of evil.

An old friend said to the preacher, "Will, I could have been saved at fifteen years of age. Now, I am tied up in business that is not right. I cannot come now." The minister prayed and urged and said, "Then, Tom, it is your business or your soul." It was a desperate struggle of years, but the victory was finally won in the midst of great physical suffering. A pastor of one of our greatest city churches told of his conviction and conversion. He said that he stood in the audience with his boy friend, and felt the call of the Spirit, and yielded and trusted and confessed. The mother of the other lad turned to her child, and forbade any step on his part. This second boy drifted into drunkenness and gambling and killed a companion in sin. He fled and escaped detection, and later added another murder to his crimes. This time he was apprehended and tried and sentenced, and the great preacher said, "Here I am tonight the pastor of this good church, and my boy friend is doing thirty-seven years in the penitentiary."

5. *The Bible and history give many examples of children who have served the Lord.* The child Samuel early ministered before Jehovah, and heard the voice which at first he did not recognize, and Eli had the wonderful privilege of introducing him to God (1 Sam. 3: 1). Josiah was but eight years of age when he came to the throne, and in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father (2 Chron. 34: 3). Of Timothy it was told by Paul that even from a babe he had been taught the Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3: 15).

It is no new thing for children to trust and obey Jesus. The first of the early Christian martyrs was saved at about nine years of age, and suffered death for the Saviour when ninety-five. Think of eighty-six years of Christian service! Edwards was saved at seven. Isaac Watts trusted the Master at nine. Matthew Henry, from eleven years of age, was the devoted follower of Jesus.

Charles Spurgeon was but a young man when he looked and lived, and his testimony is that those who are saved early rarely ever go astray. Richard Fuller said he thought he was doing God service by keeping children away, until his own little child's conversion showed him his folly and his sin. Noah Webster turned from his door the minister who came to talk to his child about church membership, saying that he was capable of instructing his own daughter. The little girl showed so plainly her changed heart and her Christian faith, that Webster sent for the minister and said he wanted what his child had, and desired to know the way of life.

6. *All too often sad and irreparable mistakes are made.* Jesus said, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18: 6). The Saviour then pronounced woe upon the one through whom the occasion for stumbling comes. The law of the harvest still holds. Parents need not expect that in the home circle they can sow the seed of material and fleshly ideals and then later on reap spiritual results (Gal. 6: 7), for this is contrary to all the laws of God. We, who can thank God for the home influences which so helped us to know that godliness is profitable unto all things, should see to it that our children shall have the same occasion for thanksgiving, and help them to the truth which brings promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come (1 Tim. 4: 8). Many are the sad-hearted parents who discouraged early surrender to Christ, only to find that their mistake had become irreparable. Instead of using the divinely given opportunity to instruct in the gospel and to lead on to repentance and faith and trust, the false standard of intellectual understanding was set up, and the child was turned into the way that led on into fondness for sin and into hardness of heart.

Hear the cry of the mother as she says, "Pastor, my boy was interested and I interfered, and now he will not even come to the church with me, and every time you plead for the young folks to come, it wrings my heart." Look at that group of friends trying to win Annie to the Saviour, and notice that she is as cold and unresponsive as a block of marble, and then listen to the parents as they confess their error in refusing to be interested when she was concerned. Another mother refuses to allow the pastor to talk with her boy, and is warned that she must take the responsibility. She replies that she is willing to do so. Before the minister turns from her door, he says, "Knowing as I do the danger of repressing the divinely given desire, and knowing the temptations which are about your boy here in this section of the city, I must say before leaving that you are doing a most dangerous thing. He is young now, and he is not bothering you, and you are not willing for him to be saved and give his early life to the service of God; but one of these days when he begins to stay out nights and when he comes home drunk, you will be eager for some one to pray and to help, because then he will be bothering you. How much better it would be for him to be saved now to the glory of God!" One of our greatest ministers delayed the boy in his desire for baptism, saying that the family would soon be on vacation, and there would be time to talk it over, and then obedience could follow in the fall. The summer brought sickness and death, and the parents came home with the little body in a casket. They were confident of the child's trust and acceptance, but they carried forever after a sad memory. Another boy of tender years said to his mother, "I hope I will not die tonight." "Why?" "Because I have not been baptized." "Do you think baptism will save you?" "No, I am already saved, for I am trusting in Jesus." "Why, then, are you disturbed?" "Because I wouldn't like to go to heaven and not do what the Lord told me to do."

7. *The Saviour promises special care to the little ones who believe on him.* Read again the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and notice what Jesus says as to their guardian angels which "do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." Give special attention to the fact that the promise concerning the one sheep which goes astray and which is sought and brought back, is made about the little ones who believe. The Saviour says, "Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18: 14). When giving to Peter his work along with his triple confession, Jesus commanded him to take care of the lambs (John 21: 15). Sometimes the young Christian will fall into temptation, and will wander from the right path, even as do those who are older, but in the stormy years of adolescence and of questioning and self-realization he will have an anchor that holds. The joy of salvation will be restored, and the voice of the Good Shepherd will be recognized and obeyed.

One young man in his "fool hill" days followed the lure of worldliness, and later found himself questioning whether he had ever been saved. Doubt as to conversion had come from doing doubtful things. Rededication came and the mists disappeared and the light shone, and then the causes of the sorrow became clear and plain. A business man stood to ask for prayer, and in the interview which was arranged the story was told. As a young boy he was away from his own home because of school advantages, and was converted, but listened to the voice of the adversary and delayed obedience until he was again at home. By that time the devil had chilled his enthusiasm, and the joys of obedience and service were filched from him; and yet after some thirty years he is brought back to the right path. The losses were great, very great, but not complete. Mistakes in this vital matter are many, and there is every reason for intelligence and faithfulness, and prayer for wisdom; but the most grievous and irreparable wrong will be to resist the

impressions of the Spirit and to refuse the offer of Jesus and to harden the heart against God.

8. *People saved in early life should be most useful in the kingdom of God.* There will be so much less of the power of evil habits to combat. The wasted years of sinning will not haunt and hinder. Clean living and clean thinking will make mightily for clean home-making and clean citizenship. Mind and heart will be enriched for greater testimony and service. A saved life will be joined with a saved soul, and on the foundation of Christ there will be erected a building of gold and silver and granite, and when the testing time comes the teachings and the character will not suffer loss in the fires of that great day (1 Cor. 3: 10-15). We are building for eternity. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. What we do and what we believe and what we teach have much to do with what we are, and with what we shall be. The earlier we begin the better. We do not have to understand in order to be saved, but to believe, to trust, to commit ourselves and all that we have to the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16: 31). Those who believe have eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but have passed from death unto life (John 5: 24).

The brand plucked from the burning is indeed a trophy of mercy and grace, and gives occasion for gratitude and praise; but far more to be preferred is a long and useful career, begun in the eager trust of a youthful and promising life. The repentance of those early days becomes more and more real as the sinfulness of sin is increasingly realized, and gratitude grows with the knowledge of what sin indulged might have meant. Gypsy Smith heard the glowing testimonies of redeemed profligates and rejoiced with them, but told them that he had even more for which to be thankful, because he was saved when he was a child and had beep kept from the coarse and vulgar crimes which they had confessed. He who is rescued in his mature years is a soul saved, but is often only one unit in the kingdom; while he who begins with

Christ early, possesses the possibilities of a multiplication table in the winning of a lost world.

9. *Children do not always live to maturity.* They oftentimes die in their youth, and if they are ever saved it must necessarily be in this brief period. It must always be an occasion for sorrow when loved ones must lay away beneath the flowers the body of a child, but more than in any other thing will they find comfort in the assurance of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "Fifteen years for nothing," said the lad at the end of the way, while the godless parents knew of no source of help for their minds and hearts. Another boy, who had been forbidden of his father to obey his Lord, was later hopelessly ill. When the physician made this known to the parents, then remorse came when there might have been comfort. The father begged forgiveness and said to the child that if he would only get well, not only should he carry out his desire, but he would go with him. The child made reply, that he would be willing to die if that would bring the conversion of his father. A pastor who was called home to be with the parents in the sudden going of their sunny-faced son of thirteen, was glad with them that four years before the happy child had walked into the baptismal waters along with his father, and that they both made their public and spoken confession of their trust in Jesus as Saviour and Lord. The mother did not wear black to the funeral of the lad, but was dressed in white from head to foot, for she was walking in the light of God's love and truth and grace.

There is a story told of a child in the hospital who learned the message about Jesus from another lad on the next cot, and eagerly turned his hungry heart to the Saviour. He wanted to know how he could make his trust known to the Great Physician when he came again to the ward. The friendly advice was that he lift his hand and the Master would understand, but growing weaker and drowsy the sick child feared the hand would fall and the Saviour might pass him by unobserved. The

little boy in the other bed took his pillow from under his head and used it to prop up the lifted hand, and the next morning a cold and lifeless hand gave mute evidence of a child who believed, and who sought to make known his trust and love.

10. *All must come as children or they can never enter the kingdom.* Jesus says most emphatically that whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein (Mark 10: 15). Why wait until we are men and women and then have to go back and be children again? We do not wait until our loved ones are in jail for stealing before we teach them to be honest. We do not delay until they are drunkards in the gutter before we warn them against the evils of strong drink. We send for the doctor at once in case of illness, and seek to prevent the progress of the disease. Why delay repentance and trust and obedience until sin has had its opportunities for further enslavement? Why not be as wise concerning spiritual matters as in temporal affairs? Why not be even more concerned for the soul than for the body? Why not trust without delay?

One of our greatest denominational leaders was saved as a child. He was under such conviction that a good man with a knowing heart saw his concern and was eager if possible to help. He followed the child when he left a neighbor's house for the church. The boy tried to outwalk the man, desiring to be alone, but he was overtaken, and was told of the way of salvation, but stumbled over the very simplicity of faith. They came to a great oak tree which stretched its strong arm out over the road, and the man said, "Suppose, William, that you were there on that limb, and I came along and bade you drop into my arms; would you do it?" The child was too honest to be untrue, and said, no, that he would be afraid. The man saw his failure, and said again, "Suppose Jesus should come, and should tell you to let go and trust him, would you do it?" Quickly and eagerly the boy said,

"Yes," and wished it were possible to thus manifest his faith in the Saviour. William E. Hatcher saw the light in this simple way, and through the years the cause of our Saviour has been blessed by many, many great souls who began early to walk with the Lord.

SYNOPSIS

(1) Children early come to realize their sinful nature and their need of salvation.

(2) Jesus invites them to come and it is far easier to do so before the evil days arrive.

(3) History and the Bible give many examples of early coming, and delay is all too often irreparable.

(4) The Saviour promises special care. The earlier the Christian life is begun the greater the possibilities of service.

(5) There is every danger in delay, and even those who are older must go back to the child spirit in order to be saved.

CHAPTER XII

Wisdom Will Be Ready to Answer Those Who Make Excuses

Jesus says that the world is not being more rapidly saved, because of the freedom of the human will and the sinfulness of the human heart and the pride of the human spirit and the need of human agency. These things, we remember, are seen in the story of the king who made a marriage for his son. The servants were sent to call the invited guests to the wedding feast, but they would not come. When other messengers came and the invitation was urged, they made light of it. We recall that some gave foolish excuses, and some seized the king's servants and mistreated and murdered them. So the representatives of the king were told to go to the crossroads and to out-of-the-way places, and to invite everybody, and when the time came the gathering place was filled with guests.

How many times the workers today find the same conditions repeated! People still are found who laugh and sneer and mock, and others who give no heed but go to their country places or to their places of business or to their own pleasures. All too often it can still be said that they all with one consent began to make excuse. If we are wise, we may be able to give the right answer to such people and win them to the truth, or at least to expose their folly. Maybe we can so use the Bible as to awaken in them a true consciousness of sin, and let them see how the father of lies is endeavoring to entrap and enslave them (John 8: 44).

1. *"There are some things I just cannot give up."* This is the excuse of one who is wedded to the world, or is

guilty of secret sin, or is entangled with evil companions, or is in the grip of some enslaving habit. This was true of the young druggist in Florida, who confessed to the visitor that his life was impure, and he was unwilling to turn away from his sin. He said he would not again be in the services. He was selling his soul and his Saviour and heaven for vulgar and debasing and remorseful slavery. When men and women choose against Jesus, it is because there is some Barabbas whom they prefer, for every wrongdoer hates the light and does not come into it lest his actions should be exposed (John 3: 20). Jesus says that sin is the only thing that can keep people from believing on him (John 16: 9), and that if only they are willing to do his will they shall know whether the teaching is from God (John 7: 17).

In answering this excuse, we should show the sinner that it is a choice between life and death (Deut. 30: 19; Matt. 6: 24); that each one makes his own decision and must give account of himself (Rom. 14: 12); that anything which keeps from Jesus as Saviour becomes the price of the soul (Mark 10: 21); that one's own relatives and friends must not be first (Matt. 10: 36); that worldly preferences lead to enmity against God (James 4: 4); that soon the world and its lust, which are now hindering, will lose their charm and will pass away (1 John 2: 17); that the wages of sin is death and the eternal harvest terrible to contemplate (Gal. 6: 7); and that even if it were possible for one individual to have all the wealth and pleasure and power and ambition and sin of the whole world, it would be impossible to calculate the loss to him who thus chooses an everlasting hell prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 10: 28; 25: 41).

2. *"You have some people in the church worse than I am."* A young man kept saying this to the visiting minister, and would take his dog and gun and get away on Sunday. He refused every urgent invitation to come to the revival meetings, and spoke of individuals whose

inconsistencies were too glaring for him to associate with them. This was kept up until finally the preacher said to him, "Did you know that the letter which you wrote to that fallen woman in St. Louis is in the hands of two of the good women here?" His face turned white with surprise and guilt. It was his own sin, and not the wrongdoing of others, that was keeping him from the Saviour. He must answer for himself when the books are opened (Rev. 20: 12). The prayer of the penitent is acceptable to God, rather than the boast of the self-satisfied (Luke 18: 14). Our condition before God is what counts, and yet our righteousness is only as filthy rags (Rom. 10: 3). Our failure to do the good which we know becomes sin to us, it matters not what others may do or not do (James 4: 17). Our criticism of others for falling short constitutes a claim that we know what a Christian ought to be, and will therefore condemn us. Jesus will say, "Thou hypocrite" (Matt. 7: 5). It will be terrible if you and I must have the Master say to us, "You claimed to know what a Christian should be, and set the standard for others, and now out of your own mouth I will judge you."

3. *"There are hypocrites in the churches."* Maybe there are some, but most Christians are ashamed that they come so far short, and are distressed over their weaknesses, and are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. All the hypocrites are not in the churches. There are many out in the world, in society, in business, in politics, and in all sorts of professions and positions of trust, and it is better to live in a church with a few of them for a few years than to live in hell forever with all of them (Matt. 23: 13). If a hypocrite stands between you and Jesus, then he must be nearer to God than you are. If the critic is hiding behind the hypocrite, then the one who is able to hide thus must be even smaller than the object that conceals him. Maybe the one criticized does not understand as well what he should be, and he will be beaten with fewer stripes than the one

who knows better (Luke 12: 47). He who judges another will in this way become inexcusable, for wherein he judges he condemns himself (Rom. 2: 1), and a terrible woe is pronounced upon the one who not only refuses to enter the kingdom of heaven himself, but gets in the way of others who are seeking to do so (Matt. 23: 13). Dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolators and all who love the false and the hypocritical are to be shut out of the heavenly city (Rev. 22: 15). One day a big dog outside of a yard fence was barking and snarling, and was saying what he would do to the dog on the inside if he could only get through. A little later in their race up and down they both came to a big open gate, and what do you suppose the two hypocrites did? They both of them backed off, cowards that they were. The hypocrite out of the church, who says that he would be true if every one inside was right, may think he is honest, but he is mistaken, and may be too late discovering himself.

4. *"I am doing the best I can."* This is not true, for every one of us knows that he fails of what he might be and do. There is none who can claim that he has never wilfully committed sin. Even the little boy with the hatchet, who told the truth about the cherry true, surely must have been human as the rest of us. If he was, then that was not his only temptation to tell a lie, and that was not the only way in which he would have opportunity to do wrong. The claim of perfection would never be made by any honest and sane person, for all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. If we say sincerely that we do the best we can, then we must have a very limited can. However, if we should, still we must remember that without the new birth we cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3: 3); that he who fails to trust in Jesus is already under condemnation and is abiding under the wrath of God (John 3: 18, 36); that by grace we are saved through faith, and God's gift to us is not on the ground of merit but of mercy and love and righteousness in Christ Jesus the Lord (Eph. 2: 8, 9).

Paul said he had kept the law, and yet confessed himself to be the foremost of sinners (1 Tim. 1: 15). It is the one who believes not, that shall be damned (Mark 16: 16).

5. *"God is too good to punish me."* A man said this in his talk with an old friend, as they rode together on the train. He said he believed more in the goodness of the Lord than did the preacher, and saw no need for an acceptance and confession of Christ. A pocket Testament was opened and the man who said that because God was good he would presume and reject the offer of love, was asked to read. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness," the thing in which he said he believed; "not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance," but not to presumption and to rejection of the way of escape which God in his goodness has provided. Instead of gratitude and trust, "after thy hardness of heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2: 4, 5). In this very way a distinction is made between the children of God and the children of the devil (1 John 3: 10), for the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6: 9). He who refuses to build upon the rock may have a good looking house, but it will go down when the testing time comes, and great will be the fall of it (Matt. 7: 27).

6. *"I am an agnostic."* Three different times in one chapter we are told of how Jehovah gave those up who refused to have God in their knowledge (Rom. 1: 28). If they were willing to do the will of God they would come to know (John 7: 17), and there is plenty of evidence that will be given to those who obey (Acts 5: 32). We, too, may say that we know him whom we have believed, when we are ready to trust and obey as did Paul (2 Tim. 1: 12). We may know only in part, and may not be able to see the distant scene, but we obey the light we have and are following on to know the Lord, and one of these days we shall see face to face and shall know

fully as we are known (1 Cor. 13: 12). The agnostic egg in the nest said to its neighbor, "Strange things are going on in this shell. A body has formed in here, with legs and feet and neck and head and bill, and along with these has come an impulse to break this shell and get out of here; but I am an agnostic and I do not know whether there is any out of here. I will stay where I am." The neighbor egg related a similar state of things, and said, "I do not believe I would have a body like this just for this shell, and I believe that this impulse would not be given if there were no outside to which to go, and I am going to pip my shell today and get out of here." The next day the farmer's wife found an egg in the nest unopened, and when she thumped it with her thimble the opening shell revealed a dead agnostic chick.

7. *"I am a believer in 'Christian Science.'"* A young woman in conversation with the pastor said she believed that God was "The All Good," that he made everything and therefore everything is good, and that because this is true there can be no sin and no wrong, and that the cure for all ills is to come to know "truth." She was asked about her "defect of mortal mind." If God made all things, and everything is good, then where did she get the "defect," and why isn't that also good? She said that she did not know. Satan does not come as the pictures we have seen would have us suppose, with ugly appearance and with horns and hoofs and tail. No! He comes as a teacher of truth, and as an apostle of Christ. He is willing for us to have all the religion we want, and to look upon Jesus as a great teacher and the best of men, provided we reject him as the Redeemer, who on Calvary's cross made atonement for sin. It is no wonder there are so many counterfeit religions and fads, for such teachers are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves as apostles of Christ. This is no marvel, for even Satan himself was transformed into an angel of light. It is not unusual therefore if his ministers call themselves ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11: 13-15).

The Spirit tells us expressly, that in the later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4: 1). Timothy was warned against the oppositions of knowledge which is falsely so called, and which some professing have erred concerning the faith (1 Tim. 6: 20, 21). Those who deny sin, make God a liar, and cannot have his word in them (1 John 1: 8-10). The gospel tells us that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15: 3), and just as it is necessary to be born of the flesh to live the natural life, so we must be born of the Spirit to live the spiritual life (John 3: 6, 7).

8. *"I am a Roman Catholic."* Oftentimes the longings are so well defined, that the heart hunger for real and vital experience is so pronounced that the worker has only to hold up Jesus as Saviour, and there is immediate response. In other cases the mind is so fixed upon externals and ritual and sacraments and saints and church authority, that it requires much tact and patience and tenderness and prayer to get Catholics to see Jesus only as their hope of salvation (Acts 4: 12). The purpose is the showing of God's righteousness, so that they may realize his justice in saving those who trust in Jesus, and who believe in justification by faith apart from works (Rom. 3: 26-28). The truth should be made clear that we are saved by what Jesus has done for us, and that we are rewarded according to what we do for him (Rev. 22: 12; 1 Cor. 3: 14). Saved by Jesus and rewarded according to works! To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness (Rom. 4: 5). Through Jesus every one that believes is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13: 38, 39), for there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2: 3-5). God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, and "he that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life" (1 John 5: 12). Jesus

himself tells us plainly that he is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no one comes to the Father except through him (John 14: 6). The final excuse will probably be, that to break with Romanism is to forsake the religion of the parents and is to violate obligations solemnly taken. There is need then to press, kindly, but firmly, the fact that any one who loves father or mother or son or daughter more than Jesus is not worthy of him, and that any one who refuses to take up the cross and follow him cannot be his disciple (Matt. 10: 37).

9. *"I am a Jew."* One does not cease being a Jew when he trusts Jesus as his Saviour. He is more of a Jew and a better Jew and a truer son of Abraham when he accepts his own Messiah. One of our most loyal and successful soul winners gives an address on "Why I am a Jew." His first reason is because of his physical birth, and then the other is because he has trusted in the Jewish Messiah and is a true child of Abraham by faith and by the second birth. How happy the real Israelite is who can say, "Surely he hath borne my griefs and my sorrows; he was wounded for my transgressions; he was bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon him; and with his stripes I am healed" (Isa. 53: 4, 5). Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ (Acts 2: 36). The testimony which Christians bear to both Jews and Gentiles is repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20: 21). The prophet says that one of these days there will be poured out upon the house of David the spirit of grace and supplication, and they will look unto him whom they have pierced (Zech. 12: 10). They will come to know that in the name of Jesus, whom they crucified and whom God raised from the dead, there is salvation, and that there is no second name given under heaven and among men, wherein we may be saved (Acts 4: 10-12).

A young woman, whose life had been endangered by fire, was rescued by her father, but in doing so his right

hand was so burned that he carried the scars with him to the grave. When being introduced to a stranger he would extend his left hand in greeting, and would put the other behind his back. The daughter would lovingly bring the scarred hand to view, and would tell of how her life had been spared, and would speak of her gratitude. When one day the angel of death had claimed the father, those who placed his body in the casket saw to it that the good hand was above the one which bore the marks of sacrificial suffering. When the daughter saw what had been done, she took the hand that had been wounded for her, and bestowing upon it kisses of affection, she lifted it to its rightful place of gratitude and love. Jew and Gentile are included in the propitiation which was made for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2: 2). Our sins he himself bore in his own body on the cross, so that we being alienated from our sins may live righteous lives, for it is by his stripes that we are healed (1 Peter 2: 24). He is the end, the consummation of the law, to bring righteousness to every one, whether Jew or Gentile, who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10: 4).

SYNOPSIS

(1) Jesus is first to those who are saved. He is their ideal, and not someone who is in the church.

(2) Wrongs do not make right the evil, and no false security can save us from the harvest of sin.

(3) The agnostic and the deceived "scientist" are only closing their eyes to the light and are refusing to enjoy the sun.

(4) The Roman Catholic, the Jew, the Gentile, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate must be saved only through Jesus.

CHAPTER XIII

Wisdom Will Be Able to Help Those Who Have Difficulties

There is the greatest difference between one who is only making excuses in order to hide the real reason for rejecting the Saviour, and another who is interested and eager and wants to be saved and desires help in meeting and mastering some difficulty. The worker who is true will pray most earnestly for wisdom, that he may not compromise with the one and that he may be most sympathetic and most helpful in dealing with the other. In dealing with doubt we find much of the same situation. On the one hand doubts have come because of indulgence in sin. Moral vision has been impaired, and the evil heart of unbelief does not want the truth to be true, and the light is shunned because the deeds are evil. On the other hand the honest doubter is ready to accept the evidence, and will be glad for the truth to become clear, and will be willing to accept and obey the present light though not yet able to see the distant scene.

We who love souls are glad to study that we may show ourselves approved unto God, workmen who need not to feel any shame, rightly handling the word of truth (2 Tim. 2: 15). Dr. F. B. Meyer tells of how he prayed for soul winning power, and that Jesus seemed to stand near him as he knelt and asked for this great blessing. The Master seemed to ask if he were willing to give up anything which might be in the way of this desire, and Mr. Meyer handed up to the Saviour the keys to his heart and life, indicating the willingness to put himself unreservedly in the Lord's hands. Jesus

took the bunch of keys, and looked them over, and said, "Are they all there?" The unwilling answer was, "N'no! I took one little one off." The Master then said kindly but firmly, "I want them all." "We cannot be channels of blessing if our lives are not free from known sin; we shall barriers be and a hindrance to those we are trying to win."

1. *"I am too great a sinner."* This is a difficulty which it is a joy to remove, and is probably the most hopeful of all cases. What a privilege it is to show the soul under such conviction that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19: 10); and that God commends his own love toward us, because Christ died for us while we were yet sinners (Rom. 5: 8). God wants to save, and takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (2 Peter 3: 9), and proves his love by the gift of his only begotten Son (John 3: 16). Jesus says that as the condition of the sick appeals to the physician, even so does the condition of the sinner appeal to him (Matt. 9: 12), and no case is too hard for him, even though it be the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1: 15). Whosoever will may come (Rev. 22: 17), and through the work of Jesus our scarlet sins are made white as now (Isa. 1: 18), for in him we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1: 7). If the sinner is forever lost, it is because he will not come to Jesus (John 5: 40; 6: 37). The scarlet woman related her sad story, and said, "I hate my mother. She saw my danger and did not warn me, and laughed at me when I made my first wrong step." The Spirit of God had come in convicting power, and she was wondering if there could be any forgiveness for one who had gone so far astray. She confessed her sins, she trusted Jesus, she found peace, and followed Jesus in baptism and in service. To the young preacher, who seemed to have some misgivings as to the power of the gospel, old John Newton said, "Since Jesus saved me, I have never had any doubt as to his power to save any one else in the world."

2. *"I am afraid I cannot hold out."* The conductor gives the signal, but the train remains at a standstill. A second and a third time he pulls the bell cord, but the engineer gives no heed, and the conductor hurries forward to the engine and says to the man at the throttle, "Didn't you hear the signal?" "Yes." "Well, why don't you pull out?" The engineer replies, "Because I haven't steam enough to take me through to the end of the run." We know that if there were that much it would blow his engine to pieces. What he needs is steam enough to start, and he will have more as he goes, and will find supplies at the coal chutes and water tanks along the way. What the lost soul needs is faith enough to start. He is exactly right when he says that he cannot hold out, and what he needs is faith in the sustaining grace of God. The sinful nature is fallen and is in a state of enmity to God, and the soul must have divine help to conquer. There must be a new nature (Gal. 6: 15), and then he who begins the good work will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phils. 1: 6). God is able to keep from stumbling (Jude 24), and to guard all that we put into his keeping (2 Tim. 1: 12). Spiritual life will come from the indwelling of the Holy Guest, and the Saviour was named Jesus because he it is who saves us from our sins (Matt. 1: 21). We have the promise that no temptation shall come from which we may not have the way of escape (1 Cor. 10: 13). He who is born of God will overcome the world, and the victory will be assured because of our faith (1 John 5: 4). We are to labor earnestly in working out our salvation, remembering always that it is God himself whose power creates in us both the desire and the power to carry out his gracious will (Phils. 2: 13).

3. *"I have tried once and failed."* That is true of every one who only tries, but the one who trusts cannot fail. The way to get well is not to try only, but to trust the physician. A Christian woman said to the

doctor, "I am sick and I cannot cure myself, and so I sent for you and am putting my life in your hands and am depending on you to make me well." Then she said to the physician for whom she had so often prayed, "You are sin-sick, doctor. You cannot heal yourself, but you can turn your case over to the Great Physician." The truth was so clearly put that in a few moments he said, "Is that it? Is that what it means to trust Christ for salvation?" Then presently, after the silence of deep thought, and as if he had made a great discovery, he said, "That's it. I see it! I see it now, and I will trust him. How simple! How simple! Just what I ask my patients to do." If one has failed it is because he has trusted self instead of Jesus (John 10: 28), and has not had the love which manifested itself in glad and prompt obedience (Acts 2: 41). The little baby who makes his first step and totters and falls is not spurned by the parents because the trial failed of perfection, but is encouraged to trust and continue to try until finally he is able to walk and later to carry heavy burdens upon his shoulders. Like as a father is interested in his children, so the Lord is concerned for those who fear him (Psalm 103: 13). We will grow in the Christian life if we will study God's Word (Luke 4: 4), and will be as faithful in prayer as we are in caring for our bodies (Phils. 4: 6), and will confess and forsake sin as it is manifested (1 John 1: 9), and will present ourselves a living sacrifice holy and wholly unto God (Rom. 12: 1, 2).

4. *"I don't feel right."* How can we expect to feel right when we are doing wrong? How can we possibly enjoy the satisfaction which comes from the good dinner before us, if we simply sit there and refuse to partake of it? A Virginia Baptist minister was the guest in a lovely home while he was conducting revival meetings, and he longed to see the father of the family become a Christian. One night the host said as they came in from the service, "Dr. Hutson, would you like to

have some water?" The reply was, "Yes, thank you, I would, for I am very thirsty." When the water was brought, Dr. Hutson stood with his hands behind him, and his host said, "I beg your pardon, didn't you say you wanted some water?" "Yes, I did, and I am very thirsty." The gentleman quickly asked, "Then why don't you take it?" Dr. Hutson made reply, "Why don't you take salvation?" The sinner feels that he is lost, or he should feel so, for he is lost (John 3: 36), and the order always must be fact and faith and then feeling, for feeling results from faith and obedience (Acts 5: 32). The demand for feeling before we will believe is to distrust God, and without faith it is impossible to please him (Hebrew 11: 6). It is not feeling, or even faith, that saves. It is Jesus who saves, and as many as receive him to them gives he the right and the power to become children of God (John 1: 12).

5. *"There is one person whom I cannot forgive."* If we do not forgive, then we are not forgiven (Mark 11: 26), for we cannot love God and hate our brother at the same time (1 John 4: 20). To hold malice against another is to be in heart a murderer (1 John 3: 15), and to ask God to forgive us our sins as we forgive every one who has sinned against us, is to ask the Lord to curse us if we are unforgiving (Luke 11: 4). Anybody can return good for good, and even the publicans do that (Matt. 5: 46), but only God's grace gives love for enemies and for those who despitefully use us (Luke 6: 27). We have wronged God far more than others have wronged us, and we show base ingratitude if we demand satisfaction to the last farthing, when such abundant mercy has been bestowed upon us (Matt. 18: 35). Vengeance belongs to God, and we are sure to make mistakes if we claim that right for ourselves. It will be sad indeed if we allow an enemy to direct our lives and to produce in us the bitterness which we have condemned in him. The spirit of Christ is best for us, and will win our brother. A tenant in Virginia would

not even meet the rich man who came to see him, in an endeavor to right the seeming wrong. The tenant's oldest son died, and he was seeking in vain for a place to bury his boy. The other man met him on the railroad trestle, and coming to him with extended hand he said, "Brother B., I understand that you have no place to bury George. You may lay him away up there on the hill in my burying ground if you will." The tenant took his hand, confessing his wrong, and asking to be forgiven. The rich man had won his brother, and his spirit was a blessing to the whole community.

6. *"I just can't believe."* Can't believe whom? If we receive the witness of men, surely we will not make God a liar by refusing to believe him (1 John 5: 9). We must not allow ourselves to be deceived as to the harvest which comes through distrust (Gal. 6: 7), and we need to be reminded that it is the god of this world who blinds the minds of the unbelieving lest they see and trust and be saved (2 Cor. 4: 3). If there be first a willing heart, it is acceptable, and he who is willing to do his will shall come to know (John 7: 17). He who receives Jesus as Lord and Saviour is already trusting, and the Master tells us that any one who comes to him will in no wise be cast out (John 6: 37). In a meeting of young people the speaker told them that he had a dollar in his hand. They had not seen it, and when he asked what he held there, they very promptly answered, "A dollar." "How do you know?" "You said so." He then asked if they believed he would keep a promise made, and practically all hands went up. He then said, "I will give the dollar to the first boy or girl who comes after it." There was a long wait, and then some of the children would be about to come, but would hesitate and then would lean back in the seat. Finally, a boy with his arm in a sling came from the back of the church, and was given the new one dollar bill. The minister then said to the crowd, "You indicated that you believed me, but either you were mistaken or you

did not want the dollar enough to come after it." The gift of God is eternal life. We cannot buy it, and we cannot earn it, and we cannot deserve it, but we can accept it as a gift. A young woman was told by her father that he bought ten sheep on the market, and if when questioned about it she had said, "I don't like to say, for fear I should be telling a lie," she would have been making her father a liar.

7. *"It is too late now for me."* He who is bitter against Christ and who rejoices in evil and is absolutely without concern is indeed in a bad way. If he has refused light, and has wilfully rejected Jesus, and has maliciously charged that the Saviour's work is of the devil, then there is little if any encouragement to pray for him. On the other hand, if there be the slightest concern, fan the spark into flame, pray that the unbelief may be helped, urge the sinner to go as far as he knows and do anything which will indicate a surrendered will, and by no means to delay but to act and act quickly. A young man who had taken a seat near the door saw his mother coming to him once more. He loved her too much to be rude, but in response to her entreaty he said over and over, "No, mother, not tonight." Finally she turned away after saying, "Well, Tom, I will never come to you again. I give you up." He said, "What, my mother gives me up? Then, I must be wicked indeed!" He went forward for prayer and was saved that night. The thief on the cross was saved (Luke 23: 43), and God does not want any to be lost (2 Pet. 3: 9), for Jesus did not come to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved (John 3: 17). If we are lost, then let it be with our eyes and hearts fixed upon Jesus, but we can never be lost that way. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life (John 3: 14).

8. *"I want to be saved, but I do not know the way."* The best way to help one who really desires to have an

intelligent and assured faith is to sit down for a quiet and undisturbed interview, and go over the whole matter, Bible in hand. (1) Show that all are in sin, by nature (Ephes. 2: 3), by choice (John 3: 19), and by practice (Rom. 3: 23). (2) The consequences of sin are sure, for we are condemned already (John 3: 18) and are under wrath (John 3: 36), and death is sure where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9: 48). (3) We cannot save ourselves by works (Ephes. 2: 8, 9), or by ordinances (Heb. 9: 22), or by keeping the law (Gal. 2: 21). (4) Salvation, though, is possible for all as seen in God's desire (2 Pet. 3: 9) and in the gift of Jesus (John 3: 16) and in the plan of justice and holiness and love (Rom. 10: 4). (5) Delay is always dangerous, but is specially so here, for now is God's time (2 Cor. 6: 2), and we may be cut down (Luke 13: 7), and there is no escape if we neglect (Heb. 2: 3). (6) We are not to make ourselves better, but are to come as we are, for Jesus came to save sinners (Luke 19: 10) and died for the ungodly (Rom. 5: 8), and does not fail, even with the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1: 15). (7) The conditions are so simple that none need stumble, for we are to turn from sin (Luke 13: 3) and turn to Jesus (Acts 16: 31) and trust Jesus fully with all that we are for time and eternity (2 Tim. 1: 12). (8) The evidences of salvation will be immediately apparent, and we will confess Jesus before men (Matt. 10: 32) and will begin to obey him (John 15: 14), and will out of love for God and his children and the lost be ready for sacrifice and for service (Matt. 16: 24).

A young man on his twenty-first birthday was sent for and was told to come to his mother's room. As he entered his father arose and held out to him a jewel case in which was a beautiful gold watch, saying, "You are twenty-one years old this afternoon at a quarter past four, and your mother desires me to present you with this watch as a gift from her." Many times since that day the son has thought of what he might have said on

that occasion. Maybe, that he would wait until he could earn enough to pay the price, whatever it was, but this would have insulted her love, for she was not selling watches. The son understood the financial conditions and knew that by repeated sacrifices over a long period of time she must have been saving up for the wondrous gift. He might have said he would take the watch and wear it until he could feel like it was his, and then he would claim it, but that would have been a reflection upon her word. It was his, if he would accept it. He could have truthfully stated that he did not deserve it. She, however, was not making the gift because he deserved so much, but because she loved so much, and the gift of eternal life is not due to the merit of the sinner, but to the fact that God so loved the world.

SYNOPSIS

(1) He who is most conscious of sin will be most ready to trust the Saviour.

(2) We cannot hold out, and will fail in our every attempt, but to trust is to succeed.

(3) Feeling cannot save, but joyous emotion will come to those who trust and obey the Saviour.

(4) Faith is the victory. We believe in those whom we know to be worthy. Learn of Jesus, and faith will follow.

(5) It is never too late for those who repent and believe, and the way to be saved is to turn from sin and turn to Jesus.

CHAPTER XIV

Wisdom in Soul Winning Will Lead On to Church Membership

Did you ever see an ear of corn grow without shucks? Did you ever see any grain of any kind come to maturity which had no husk? Such grain will never reach the mill or the bread tray, will never be worth the ground out of which it grew, even if it should ever be called grain at all. The husk is of no great value in itself, but it is necessary to healthy and useful grain. The church is absolutely essential to the mature, ripe Christian life and character, and God made no mistake in giving this institution to us. "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" This was the defense of the boy Jesus against the implied reproach in the question, "Why have you treated us thus? We have been searching for you in great distress." Had they reflected, he seemed to say, there need have been no seeking—they would at once have known in what place to find him, for from his youth up his custom was to be at the place of worship, and they should have known that at every opportunity he would be about "the affairs" of his Father. This was his duty and his custom and his pleasure.

Voltaire, attempting to join the body of Christians, or Tom Paine applying for church membership, would not have created as much surprise or as many misgivings as did Saul the persecutor in his attempt to gain admission to the fellowship of the early Baptists in Jerusalem. There was much more than surprise, for this man, so the disciples seemed to think, was now seeking only another plan of securing evidence for further persecutions and for adding to the list of martyrs, at the

head of which stood the name of Stephen. The young man, so zealous for the faith of the fathers, was recognized as a leader in the crowd who stoned the man of God, and from that day forward ceased not to be the terror of men and women, for he was making "havoc of the church, entering into every house," and haling, and committing them to prison. No wonder they feared his presence, but, like the churches today, they soon remembered that God was able to save, and when Barnabas had testified to his sincerity and had spoken in his behalf, the closing doors were opened to him.

He who is wise in winning souls will show the young convert how important it is that he do as Paul did, that he ought at once to unite with God's people. The churches are necessary. There are essential truths for which they stand, truths which would not be maintained except by them, and which God through them has kept alive to the good of the individuals and to the blessing of the nations. There are many great truths which Baptists hold in common with others, and then there are other doctrines and practices concerning which we hold a distinctive position, and these essential truths are the things which make our existence a necessity.

1. *The unique place which our churches give to the Bible* is the first thing that claims our attention. The Bible, and the Bible only, is our creed, and is our rule of faith and practice. The first and last thing we ask is not as to the decisions of ecclesiastical courts, or the pronouncement of men high up on some hierarchical scaffold, or as to the statement of some man-made creed, or as to the demands of other churches, or even as to some statement of doctrine adopted by our own church. Always the first and the final word for any true Christian is as to what the Bible says, and to the Bible as the Supreme Court of last resort he takes his case. Is there a direct Bible command? Is there an example in the Scriptures? If not, then what principle of Holy Writ applies in this case? We claim that everybody has the right of access to the Bible, that to each comes the

privilege of private interpretation, and that the duty of all is to obey personally. To us religions of proxy and of coercion are alike most repulsive. We would no more force a child into an ordinance than we would summon a squad of police and overpower an unwilling man and drag him into the water.

Jesus does not say to make disciples of all people and then, before they are baptized, teach them to observe all things, but the teaching follows the baptism. In other words, young people who have repented and believed should not be kept back from baptism and church membership until they have taken a course in theology and in church practice and government. They are not to be "dipped and done," but in Sunday school and in regular pastoral ministration they are to be taught that for which the church stands.

2. *Service to God comes as a result of our beliefs as to salvation.* We are saved solely and alone by what Jesus has done for us. "It is finished," he exclaimed on the cross. By grace are we saved, and not of works. Salvation is of grace, and we serve out of love. The child obeys, not in order that he may become your child, but because he is already your child. True service is out of love, is in obedience to divine commands, and involves reward, for Jesus says that he will reward every man according as his work shall be. This dignifies and ennobles service, instead of making it the durdgery of fear.

Coming into the church should be to young people an occasion of greatest interest and concern, and they should desire above all things to be faithful to the God-given privilege and obligation. How may they rejoice in the commendation of the Father, "Well done, good and faithful servant"? By being a real factor in the church. Dr. B. H. Carroll once said: "That pastor has succeeded best who has been able to impress upon the people their obligation to attend upon the teaching and giving and memorial and praying services of the church." In the same connection he may well have added that

those who have done most to help the pastor enlist the people in all activities connected with the God-given mission of the church are the ones most pleasing to the Master.

To be real factors in the kingdom young people must be true to their church covenant; striving, as members one of another, to promote the growth of the whole body in Christian knowledge and holiness; faithfully attending upon the public worship of God and the ordinances of his house; cheerfully contributing to the poor as God may give ability, and to the ministry, to the current expenses, to the mission objects, and to all the work of the church; maintaining worship at home, because mindful of their needs and influence; seeking always to walk circumspectly in the world, that they may win the souls of men, that they may not be ensnared, and not bring reproach upon the cause of Christ, remembering that they are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. To be real factors young people must be true to the mission of their church, true to the idea that it is here to give the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to give release to the captives and sight to the blind, to bind up those who are bruised and to proclaim the time of God's special grace and favor.

3. *Baptist churches give the individual his rightful place.* We deny the divine right of kings, and of priests, and of parents. Every individual is entitled to soul liberty, to liberty of conscience, and no ruler or priest or parent is competent to deal with God for another. Every soul is responsible to God for himself, or herself, and each one is competent through Christ alone to deal with God as to the affairs of the soul. Democracy in religious matters is vastly more important and far-reaching than democracy in government of nations. Louis Luzzatti, ex-prime minister of Italy, compiler of the great Italian encyclopedia, professor of constitutional law in the University of Rome, and for many years member of the Italian parliament, speaks of Roger Williams as "The saint of religious liberty." Obadiah Holmes was

barbarously beaten by order of the Boston court for maintaining soul liberty. The road to religious freedom in many, many lands, even in America and in Virginia, may be traced by the blood of true Christian heroes.

The church is not earth-born, is not of lowly origin, but is of God, is heavenly in its character. It is built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. It is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, and it is the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. It should therefore have the high place which the Saviour has given it, in our devotion and loyalty and service. The material of the church is not that of brick or stone or wood or slate or shingles. The stones are "living," the material spiritual, and when it is fitly framed together it grows into an holy temple, in the Lord, an habitation of God through the Spirit. It is a regenerated church, and though the carving and enriching and beautifying may be done after the material is in place, still none must go in which has not been accepted by the Master. The blessings are so countless which Jesus bestows through the church, that words fail and imagination grows weary in any attempt to enumerate or to estimate them, and we, too, should hold high ideals for the work and the purity and the life of this heavenly institution.

4. *Those who have been saved should be led into the churches because we as Baptists also give to the state a place which marks us as a peculiar people,* and makes us the preservers of New Testament principles. While we maintain, as the Bible teaches, that all should respect the state and should support the state as God's agent for restraining evil and for maintaining law and order, yet we also hold firmly to the fact that rulers have no rights over the people in spiritual affairs. Every Christian is a citizen and should be faithful as such. Churches are not to be maintained by the state, and the state must not be interfered with by the churches. The very meaning of the word, the "called-out" congregation, as well as the body of the saved to which we belong,

cannot help making the appeal for a separated life and for a consecrated purpose. The doctrines of the Bible, the principles for which we stand, the ideals of the soul, all these the young people coming into the churches should know. They should from the first be made to realize that a church is not a religious club; that it is not a field merely for the pastor to work, but that all Christians have been created unto good works in the doing of which God has prearranged that we should spend our lives.

In a town in Virginia there stands near the railway station an old church building, in which in the past gracious manifestations of the Lord's presence have been enjoyed, and in which the Word of God has been faithfully taught. Now over the entrance there hangs a sign in large, black letters, "Lunch House," and the people pass in and out of its doors with little if any thought of feeding the soul. Are we really fed in our churches? Those who are older should see to it that when we come into the church we come with right ideas of the church and for right purposes. That church will abide, will be a blessing, which keeps in mind and heart its divine origin, which keeps in view its glorious plan and purpose, which holds to the truths of the gospel with no compromise, which constantly seeks to shepherd the lambs and the sheep, which reaches out a helping hand to the wayward and the fallen, and which is following the Master in seeking and saving the lost. Sir James Falshaw, twice provost of Edinburgh, chairman of the North British Railway Company, a success in business and a favorite of royalty, was asked: "Is there anything in your life, any one event, any one factor, upon which you can lay your finger as the secret of the wonderful prosperity you have enjoyed?" His reply was: "I attribute all to the fact that when I was fifteen years of age I gave my heart to God, and joined the church."

5. *The ordinances have been committed to the churches,* and the saved soul wants to do what the newly

accepted Lord has commanded. The ordinances should have their rightful place with every soul won to Christ. The burial in water and the memorial supper do not add to, or detract from, the atoning work and righteousness of Jesus. They do not possess saving power, and they do not purchase merit with the God of grace. On the contrary, only those who are already saved can know the meaning, or can appreciate the beauties and the colorings of these divine pictures of the truth of the gospel. Thus are we to show ourselves obedient, and thus are we openly and in a meaningful way to make public our profession and our faith. We are baptized and we partake of the Lord's Supper, not in order to be saved, but because we are already saved. We do not believe that the words of priests can turn bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ. So we do not approve of the mass which is professedly each time a new crucifixion of Jesus. We do not bow the knee on the streets when a procession passes by bearing "the host," a piece of bread which it is claimed has now become the real body of Christ. We rejoice in the simplicity and straightforwardness of the position which we as Baptists take on the ordinances. When William, Prince of Orange, was arming the farmers of Flanders and of Holland to revolt against the tyranny of King Philip and of Bloody Alva, a foreign ruler asked Prince William what countries and what kings were his backers. Such an undertaking was so great and so hopeless that it seemed folly to undertake it alone. The brave and good man said in reply: "You ask me if I have entered into any formal alliance with a foreign potentate. Before I took up the cause of these distressed provinces I entered into a compact with the King of kings and Lord of lords."

6. *The churches offer to the saved soul such opportunities for fellowship and service* that the wise worker will lead the new Christian on at once into membership. God has a reason for saying that we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. We are soldiers,

we need a captain, and we need the shoulder-touch of the company. We cannot well fight alone, and the influence and guardianship of the churches mean so much to us that we cannot conceive of how we could ever get along without them. God made us, knows our needs, and hence we have the home, the Sabbath, the church. What a mistake, then, even from a selfish standpoint, to stay away from God's house and from fellowship and from worship! It has been told of one type of Indian, savage as he was, that he thought himself too great to till the soil, or to gather the grain. The woman must do that, though the big Indian was willing enough to share it when the time to eat came. It is so in the churches all too often. Some man thinks that he is too big to look after church matters, that these are for women, though he is willing enough to share the protection which the presence of the church gives to his business, the quiet which its influence brings to his possessions, the ideals which it sets for his wife and children, the happiness which it brings to his home. If all people did as he does, then he would be living in a land of savages and would be food for cannibals.

Every man needs and should have good company, and in no place will he find it so surely as in the churches. The opportunities for service which the churches offer, the privilege of being laborers together with God, should cause every real man to consider this divine institution. Here is the best organization for being helpful to our fellows; here is where a friend can do most for his friend; here the citizen can do most for the state; here the statesman can do most for his country; here the soldier can do his best fighting; here the business man can make his best investment; here the philanthropist can accomplish most for mankind; here parents can be the greatest blessing to their children; here the soul can reach its highest development, and can attain its greatest possibilities. Secret orders and fraternal organizations are good only in so far as they copy something from Christ's

church. Not one of the religions of the world contains one good thing which may not be found in Christianity, and, then, too, Christianity has so much that is good which is not found in all of them put together.

A priest rebuked a young woman for reading that "bad book," the Bible, and she made reply that a little while ago her brother was an idler, a gambler, a drunkard. Since he began reading the Bible he worked with industry, he did not go to the saloon, he no longer played cards, and he began to bring home his money to his old mother, and life at home became changed and happy. Said she, "How comes it that a bad book produces such good fruits?" Great things may be said of the fruits which grow wherever a church of the Saviour is planted and flourishes.

7. *All that has been said leads up now to the fact that we as Baptists give to Jesus his own peculiar and rightful place.* He is not made a part of a process of salvation, he is not deemed insufficient and requiring human aid in redemption, he is not humiliated by basing the forgiveness of sins upon the acceptance of man-made creeds, or upon the presence of priests, or upon the application of water, or upon the deeds of the flesh. With us no ordinance, no priest, no virgin, no creed, no vestment, no ritual, no sacrament, is allowed to detract from his glory. He is our Prophet on earth, and speaks with the authority of God! he is our Priest on the cross, and makes atonement full and complete for our sins; he is our King on the throne, and in his hand holds all power in heaven and in earth. Baptists must forever be loved and honored because of the motives which have possessed them; they must forever receive the gratitude of the nations for preserving the distinctive principles for which they stand; and they must forever be praised for the heroism which has held them true to the Bible and to the Master through blood and flame and death.

"One body in Christ!" "The head, even Christ!" "And he is the head of the body—the church!" The

body lives in the head, and the head governs the body, and it is easy to see that the man who insists that Christ's church is not essential to him has apparently argued himself out of vital connection with Christ. In the Revelation we are told that he who takes from "the words of the prophecy of this Book" or adds to them, has, by his rash and deceitful handling of its teachings, shown himself unworthy a place in its blessings. He who trifles with and denies the sovereignty of God, who decries the necessity of regeneration, who ignores man's duties and privileges, who neglects the churches which Christ has died to establish, has seemingly brought upon himself the curse pronounced in the Revelation.

Those who are saved need the churches to strengthen their faith, "to prevent their religious cable from parting." They need to be surrounded by the spiritual atmosphere of holy lives, to sit under the influence of God's Word, to build up a mighty bulwark against the temptations that come to every man. It is only in such an atmosphere that man becomes really strong for the battles of life. Here is brought to his attention the message of eternal life, and here is held up before him the cross of Christ. A preacher once said to a friend, who was surprised that the minister did not claim to explain all things in the Bible, "In one respect, at least, we believers have the advantage over you; we have found the clew!" Yes, in the message proclaimed by the churches the man who is lost is given the clew, is put on the trail, and if any man will do his will he shall come into the light of knowledge and experience. After the lost soul has been saved, the presence of the Saviour in the work and worship of the churches will give to the Christian man and woman that recurring vision which is needed, if life is to be victorious and useful.

Two brothers lived in the same city. In their home they had the same privileges, the same training, the same godly mother. One of them neglected duties, became indifferent, grew to manhood a weakling, failed in every

business enterprise, involved others in his own losses, and is an all-around failure. The other turned his face toward the higher ideals, and laid hold eagerly upon his opportunities. He secured a good education, he decided to invest his life for others, he made his way through the technical school, and now he is loved and revered in his community, is sought after for positions of trust and responsibility, and has grown in the stature of Christ until his very presence is a benediction.

Two young women came to a woman's college in a Virginia city. One brought her church letter, united with the local congregation, was at Sunday school on the Lord's day ahead of time, even if she must miss her breakfast in doing so. She brought others with her to the services, did not permit neglected school duties to pile up and become a barrier to higher things, became an active worker among the young people, formed in the city many friendships which added to her own pleasure and recreation, graduated a year earlier than she expected, and a year ahead of the others who entered school with her, and left her name enshrined in the hearts and homes of the people. The other girl was recommended to the pastor in a letter from her home community, was visited and sought after for a while, but was so indifferent that she was finally let alone. She made no impression upon the school or upon the church so far as is known, and if she grew any in heart and character, if she ever blessed any other life, the pastor never heard of it. The people of the church and community were not at all interested in her graduation or her welfare, because they did not even know her name.

As young people, we have only one life to live, only one life to invest, and all of us desire to make the best investment we can of this one. Where will we put it? Where will it tell for the most? Where will its work be most likely to abide? How can we so develop it that it will be larger and better and more glorious throughout all eternity? Surely the answer is found in the very thing we have been discussing in this chapter. When

at the end of the ages Christ shall bring home to the Father's house his bride, I want to be there, don't you? When she as a bride adorned for her husband shall be received and when from the east and the west, from the north and the south, there shall be gathered the throngs of the redeemed, I want to be at the marriage supper, don't you? I want to have on the wedding garment, don't you? I want, don't you, to be among that number to whom he shall say: "Well done! Well done!! Faithful! Faithful!! Enter into the joy of thy Lord!"

SYNOPSIS

(1) Baptists give to the Bible a place above all opinions of individuals and all creeds and councils.

(2) With us Christian service is always the result of salvation and is never the procuring cause.

(3) We give to each individual his right of choice, and lay upon him the responsibility for his own decisions and acts.

(4) The state must never attempt to come between any soul and God, and the church must never attempt to coerce the state.

(5) The churches are responsible for the ordinances. The churches offer to the saved soul an opportunity to obey, and to magnify Jesus as Christ and as Lord.

CHAPTER XV

Wisdom Will Seek to Complete the Work Begun in Soul Winning

Our work does not end with making disciples. They should become apostles also. We are to teach those who have been won to observe all things, and are to give to them our Lord's promise that he will be with us all the time and everywhere, even unto the uttermost part of the earth and unto the end of the world. They are to know the risen Christ, as well as Christ crucified. We will be wise if we bring to those whom we win the assured and abiding presence of the risen Lord, and if we help them to be not only sinners saved, but also servants sent.

The time when Jesus stood in the upper room in the midst of the disciples gives a striking illustration of "the unavoidable Christ," of "the intrusive Christ," but most of all the "victorious Christ." He stands in their presence the victor over death and the grave, over sin and Satan, and is now about to begin the final instruction to those who are to be his apostles to the world. Evan Roberts, in a message to the church of which the author was pastor, said: "I find that the true way to receive is to give; the way to find ourselves is to be lost in God's work." "It is wrong to attend a place of service simply to receive." In speaking of the one who truly worships God he said: "Now this worshiper goes (1) to give, not to receive, (2) to satisfy God, not himself." There are two kinds of people, the givers and the getters. The getters get and lose, but the givers give and get, and then keep what they get, for he that giveth his life shall keep it unto life eternal.

The disciples must become apostles if the world is ever won for Christ, and Jesus seems to tell them as he stands in their midst how this victory over self and the world is to be gained.

1. *The disciple cannot become an apostle if he has not peace.* The risen Saviour breathed on them, and spoke peace to them. Peace with God through Christ, peace with the law through the cross, delivered from cowardly fear of the evil one through consciousness of spiritual strength, unhindered by fear of man because of the presence of God with him—these must be possessed or the disciple cannot be an apostle. The joy of salvation, the peace of God passing all understanding, give a message which the child of God is glad to tell. They give an eager heart, a ready tongue, and change the learner to a messenger. A young society woman recently wrote the author that she had achieved victory over some insistent worldly temptations, and was able to talk to her friends about Christ, and said that she had never before in all her life been so happy.

If we would have peace, then we must put first things first (Matt. 6: 33). Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then anything, everything else worth while will be yours. Whatever is of first importance should be given first place. All things which are secondary, or unimportant, or useless, and certainly all things harmful, should be made to step aside, and no such things should be allowed to take first place. Pity the man or woman who puts clothes ahead of character, who puts money ahead of honesty, who puts pleasure ahead of duty, who puts the world ahead of the church, who puts sin ahead of righteousness, who puts self ahead of God. The world has contempt for a son or daughter who would go off to a party and leave a dying mother, and heaven will be ashamed of the professed Christian who is untrue to a suffering Lord. Men and women despise a husband or wife who is untrue. God spurns one who is a friend of the world, and puts such an one

in the list of his enemies, and charges him with spiritual adultery (James 4: 4).

2. *The disciple cannot be an apostle until he is able to carry that vision of the closed-door room along with him.* The disciples saw his wounds and were reminded of the crucified, suffering Lord who had died for them, but they saw also the risen Lord victorious and glorious, speaking to them, blessing them. Happy the Christian who daily beholds the twofold vision! "If Christ came to this place?" No, Christ is here! If Christ came to our church, or our home, or store, or office? No, he is here all the while. If Christ were with you in your toil? No, he is with you. Do you and I see him, is the question. That is a good motto which some people put in their homes, "Christ is the head of this house, the unseen guest at every meal, the silent listener to every conversation." Once when Caesar was being taken across the Adriatic in a frail boat, the boatman hesitated and showed himself afraid, and Caesar noticing it said: *"Ne timeas, Caesarem vihis"* (do not fear, you carry Caesar!) How much more may the apostles say, "Christ is with me, what can be against me? He will never leave me nor forsake me!" He who would go on unto apostleship should be encouraged to practice the presence of Jesus, to remember this promise (Heb. 13: 5), "I will in no wise leave thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee."

One soldier cried out in the midst of a retreating horde, "There's the duke. God bless him! I'd rather see his face than a whole brigade." Sure enough, there he was, and the retreating forces were cheered by his presence, regained the lost ground, and, as they usually did when he was present, won the victory. So does Jesus appear when we need him, and to see him is to be heartened, and is to be victorious. Practice the presence of Jesus. Remember he is near to help. Go to no place where you cannot take him! Allow no thing in your home, or heart, or life that he would not approve. Do what you believe you would do in his presence. Say what his ear

would not be grieved to hear! Practice the presence of Christ!

3. *The disciple does not become an apostle until he realizes his responsible mission.* He is here, in a sense, in Christ's stead. It is a good deal for Jesus to say that whosesoever sins ye remit they are remitted, and it is a responsibility which we ought to realize. By our teaching and by our living we are binding souls for eternity or loosing them for heaven, and by our faithfulness or unfaithfulness we are turning souls towards heaven or hell. Possibly all of us have some sad memories of this nature, and have yesterdays which bring with them sincerest regret. Without this realization of responsibility the disciple will never be a worker. Not feeling it his duty, he cannot say as did Paul, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." A listener in a congregation of worshipers became convinced that the pastor was speaking of some one individual. He knew the membership well, but felt sure that something had taken place of which he was ignorant, because the speaker was so earnest and so pointed. He leaned over to a brother officer in the church and said: "To whom does the pastor refer?" The reply came quickly: "You and me." Yes, yes, we are looking about asking: "To whom does Jesus refer?" and the answer is "You and me."

We must wisely lead the saved soul on to absolute obedience. We must teach him that as Paul did, so he must not fail to follow the heavenly vision (Acts 20: 19). Dr. R. A. Torrey tells of his conviction that he ought to preach, and of how one night his mother appeared to him in a dream, and that in the dream he promised he would give up the sins which were in his way and yield himself to God's work. When he awoke, he said: "Oh, I am not responsible for that promise," and so he went on resisting, refusing. At last, when about to take his life one night, he fell on his knees and promised God to obey the oft-repeated call. Peace and power came, and ever since the Christian life has been growing and

broadening and intensifying for Dr. Torrey. So of Paul, so of Carey, so of Judson, so of your father and mother, so of your teacher and pastor, so of you and me. What is it that God keeps on bringing before you? Obey the vision! Perform the duty! Keep the commandment! Make the sacrifice! He who obeys the vision gets greater ability to see, and he who refuses increases his blindness.

4. *The disciple must receive the Holy Spirit.* Jesus would have his disciples know that their lives as Christians, as apostles, are to be lived in the Holy Spirit. This is to be true not simply of the preacher, but in every walk of life. Some one has said that there were three special characteristics of the great Welsh revival: (1) It was a movement among the membership of the churches; (2) it was evident that men were working and speaking under the conscious power of the Holy Spirit, and (3) the people were giving expression to their emotions. Evan Roberts himself prayed, he says, for thirteen years to be filled with the Spirit. Moody, Torrey, Morgan, Meyer, Dixon and such men have given special emphasis to this very point, that would we become men and women of power and blessing, we must "Be filled with the Spirit." Tarry, brother; tarry, sister; tarry, young Christian; and go not in your own power to any task, but be endued with power from on high that your work may not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. This is the secret of much of our failure to win souls in the Bible school, in personal work, in preaching, and in this likewise we may find why so many of the ordinary duties of life become drudgery instead of being done heartily as unto the Lord.

He who has yielded to the Holy Spirit for life and service can no longer be a compromising Christian. He will press onward and upward (Phil. 3: 12, 13). Salt is positive in its effects, light is positive, and Christianity is positive. Many fail by just trying to quit some things, but the house that is swept and garnished must be filled with a positive life for good, or soon the devils will make

it a positive force for evil. Frances Willard says that the crisis of her life came when she was ill with typhoid fever, and when she promised God that she, if spared, would be a positive and not a negative Christian.

5. *The apostle must have confidence in his Master's message.* Jesus said to his disciples just before he went away that thus it behooved Christ to die and to rise from the dead, and that they were to go forth and preach repentance and remission of sins in his name. So inerrant was this message to be that whosoever received it would be saved, and he who rejected it would be lost. Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ we find became the message of the apostles, and armed with these truths we, too, are to meet every rebellious soul. How careful should we be to have the right message, and how careful to have the message right! How eager we should be to tell the message, and to tell the message in the right spirit ! The message becomes a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, and this should lead us to pray often that we may love the Word, learn the Word, live the Word, give the Word, rest on the Word (2 Tim. 2: 15).

We can far better do without breakfast than without the Bible and prayer. Begin no day without praise and prayer and a bit of the Word; seek God's blessing before you dare go forth to duty and to temptation; thank God for his care and his many blessings. You would thank a friend for an apple, thank God who gives you the morning light and all that comes with it. The donkey asked the bee why he went into the flower. "For honey." "Bah, there's no honey in there." "Yes, there is," said the bee, "for I have found some." "No, no, no," said the donkey, "I have eaten hundreds, thousands of them, and I have found no honey." Well, it depends on who is talking, and who goes after it. "How can I know that the Bible is from God?" asked an earnest woman. "How do you know that the letter is from your husband?" was asked. "By the hand writing," she replied. "Suppose it is written on a typewriter, what then?" "Then," said

she, "I would know by the way he talks." God is talking in the Bible. Read it and speak to him in prayer, and let him speak to you.

6. *The disciple becomes an apostle as he goes out in Christ's name into active service,* and becomes a soul-winner with others. The learner should become the teacher. The one who hears the invitation to come should hear just as distinctly and clearly the command to go. A good rule for the apostle is that he will try to help some one each day (Jas. 1: 22). Do something for some one each day for Jesus' sake, some one from whom you do not expect any return. Do not wish you were somewhere else, and thus imagine what you would do under other conditions. You can find some one near by for whom you can do some little act for Jesus' sake. A father once said, "Little girl, you seem so unhappy. Go see if you cannot find some one for whom you can do something." A little later she is back, with expression all changed, and father asks: "Well, Miss Ginx, what did you do?" "I gave Aunt Emma my chair, and brought grandma a glass of water." Blessed secret! The getters seldom give and do not enjoy what they get; the givers always get, and enjoy all they get. He who ministers to another for Jesus' sake has ministered unto him, and such an act of love to the least of these will surely bring blessing and reward.

"Dead ripe!" Such a condition cannot wait. Harvest hands must be secured from other than the usual channels. "Dead ripe!" The waving, bending, whitening fields of grain on our western farms enlist the services of men from all over the land and from the many walks of life in order that the crop may be saved. Lift up your eyes and look, says Jesus, on the fields in need of laborers, and when you have seen the need give yourself and join in the call for reapers. "Dead ripe!" We cannot wait for the children to grow up, go through high school, college, university and seminary. "Dead ripe!" The millions who now live will have passed away in thirty-three years.

Lawyers, doctors, merchants, mechanics, traveling men, teachers, fishermen, railroad men, farmers, students, all classes must come and help, or this generation will not know Christ. When we think that the letters used in printing the Bible are not equal in number to the population of China, we begin to see something of what Jesus saw—multitudes, scattered, no shepherd and no fold. When we think of what Jesus has been, is now and will be to us, we are moved with compassion and with the desire to help others to know and trust him. When we consider the value of one soul and one life and one eternity, we want to do what Jesus did, give our vision to others and give ourselves to save the perishing throng. Beautifully did a Japanese Christian say that the bitter waters of Marah represent life, and we must each be the tree cast into the stream, giving our own selves to purify and to sweeten. When we realize that the harvest is "dead ripe," that it cannot wait, that it is bending now to the earth, that the laborers are few, that the call comes louder for help, that new fields are opening and that older stations are calling for increased forces, that the "thin red line" is asking for recruits in a cause that is not lost, and will not be and cannot be lost, we call upon ourselves and upon our fellows to pray the Lord of the harvest to send out, to drive out, to cast out, to thrust out laborers.

"Dead ripe," and workers must be led forth with a power which they cannot resist. At home and abroad we need them. As Jesus sat by the well and saw the crowds coming out of the city to find the man whom the woman was heralding, he said: "Dead ripe." As we in our land see the thousands coming down the gangway upon our shores, we say: "Dead ripe." As the workers in the cities and in the mountains and on the frontier and in places of destitution, as the missionaries in foreign lands and on the papal fields see the multiplied millions, and as the pastors in country and village and town and city realize how many fold more are their opportunities than their strength and ability, they all cry out, "Dead ripe!" "Lord, thrust out helpers, or the harvest will be

lost." Business men, professional men, laboring men, students, children, come over and help us! We are praying! He is calling! Will you say, "Send me"?

SYNOPSIS

(1) If we would be our best in soul winning we must have peace with God through Jesus.

(2) Power in the personal touch and in public address will be in proportion to the heart-contact with God.

(3) Responsibility for time and talent and for opportunities to serve must demand that we be and do our best.

(4) We shall receive power to witness for Christ after that we have tarried in prayer and have been filled with the Holy Spirit.

(5) Confidence in our message, together with a personal experience of its power to save, will send us out in the only name given among men whereby we must be saved.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND EXAMINATION

Chapter I

1. Why is it that saved people want to be winners of souls?
2. What was the purpose of the coming of Jesus? (Luke 19: 10.)
3. What is necessary if we are to be at our best in this work?
4. What scriptures are suggested for winning men and women?
5. Does God lower the law, and does he excuse sin?
6. How can God be just and save those who believe in Jesus?
7. What is the decision to which the sinner should come?

Chapter II

1. What is the distinction between principles and methods? Give some examples.
2. Why are we needed in God's plan of bringing people to Jesus?
3. In what ways does Satan hinder us in our work for souls?
4. Can you tell the story of Philip and his personal work with the eunuch?
5. Why is it that "sermons in shoes" mean so much to those who are lost?
6. Will we probably be good foreign missionaries if we neglect the opportunities near by us?
7. Do you believe that the Saviour was right in his valuation of just one soul? (Mark 8: 36.)

Chapter III

1. Why does Jesus speak of soul winning in the terms of "profit" and "loss"?
2. What would you say is the Christian's greatest business and why?
3. Are preaching and teaching sufficient without the personal approach and contact?
4. How were you led to Christ and what brought you to the final surrender?
5. How many have passed through your Sunday school without becoming Christians?
6. What would you say is probably the greatest lack in our teaching and preaching?
7. How many people have you personally been instrumental in bringing to the Saviour?

Chapter IV

1. When did David say that sinners would be converted?
2. Why does the Bible say that he who is forgiven much loves much?
3. What is meant by the statement that it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God?
4. Why is it that a Christian, just as a live wire, is a menace if not lifted up and separated and dedicated?
5. What five things are named as essential to the greatest success in the winning of the lost?
6. What is the story of the friend who came at midnight and what has it to do with success in soul winning?
7. How, in your judgment, may a Christian worker make the best preparation for the delicate and difficult task of winning to Christ?

Chapter V

1. What is your own definition of prayer? Write one out and see what you mean by prayer.
2. Why is it that human hearts insist on prayer in the face of any and all objections and difficulties?
3. Why does the author say that real prayer is the soul winner's greatest possible asset?
4. What do intellect and will and emotions have to do with being earnest and effective in prayer?
5. Why is it that there are some things which God cannot do for us unless we pray?
6. Are there any emergencies which come to us that cannot be met triumphantly by those who really pray?
7. What are some of the most memorable experiences which you yourself have had in the practice of prayer?

Chapter VI

1. What is the story of the salvation of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and who helped him to "look"?
2. What opportunities do you have each day which might be used in winning the lost?
3. Which of the ways discussed by the author do you consider as your best way of service?
4. Have you ever tried writing an earnest and prayerful letter to your friend who is lost?
5. Did you ever carefully meditate on what it will mean for your friend to be forever separated from God?
6. Can it be possible that some one is wondering why you have never once spoken of your interest in his eternal welfare?
7. Had you realized that the days are passing, and that if you ever do anything for the lost it must be done quickly?

Chapter VII

1. What does Psalm 8: 5 teach as to the value of those whom we seek to win?
2. What is the most meaningful lesson to you in the story of the prodigal son?
3. When you read Matthew 9: 36-38, what is it that you see and feel and say and do?
4. In soul winning does our work end when conversion takes place? What more are we to seek to accomplish?
5. If people consider themselves as already righteous, did Jesus come to call them? (Romans 5: 8.)
6. Why is it such a sin to refuse admission to the Saviour who knocks at the door of the heart? (Revelation 3: 20.)
7. What are the motives which should be most prominent in all of our work of winning the lost to Jesus?

Chapter VIII

1. Why is it that every saved soul will at once long for the salvation of others?
2. What is meant when it is said that we are to have in us the mind of Christ?
3. What is the most prominent characteristic in the life and work of Paul the apostle?
4. Where was the eunuch reading from which Philip began and preached unto him Jesus?
5. Is there any difference between the work of the Spirit in regeneration and in enduement? (Acts 1: 8.)
6. How do you account for it that some workers and teachers and preachers are not winners of souls?
7. Is the Holy Spirit willing to use us today, and if so, are we failing of that privilege, and why?

Chapter IX

1. What do you understand the author to mean by everyday soul winning?
2. What Bible authority and examples do we have for this kind of Christian service?
3. Is there danger that church members will expect the preachers to do all the soul winning?
4. Do you recall any lost opportunities which might have been used in this glorious work?
5. If there is joy in heaven over those who repent, may we expect joy if we share in the work?
6. Are we responsible for the way people receive the message, or only for the delivery of it to them?
7. If every saved soul is a servant sent, what will we say to our Lord if we come to him empty handed?

Chapter X

1. Why was this example of the woman at the well such a tribute to our Lord's eagerness to save?
2. What were some of the excuses which Jesus could have given for not using this opportunity?
3. Are you willing to be made willing to do the work of soul winning among the lowliest, or the highest?
4. In what way did Jesus show himself both tactful and faithful in his conversation with this sinning woman?
5. Do you agree with the author that in most cases when people under conviction of sin do not accept Jesus, they know the reason why?
6. Is it true that whatever it is which keeps a lost soul from Jesus, becomes the price which the sinner puts upon his own soul?
7. May we say with assurance to any enslaved man or woman, that no case is too hard for God, and that Christ still can save the chief of sinners?

Chapter XI

1. What evidence do we have that Jesus was interested in children?
2. How early in life did you begin to know the meaning and the guilt of sin?
3. Why is it easier and better for people to come to Jesus while they are young?
4. How much does anybody have to "understand" in order to turn from sin and turn to Christ?
5. Have you known children to make more mistakes in salvation and service than has been true of grown folks?
6. What do you consider the greatest possible mistake that parents and teachers can make as to the salvation of the children?
7. What did Jesus mean when he said that no man or woman could come into the kingdom other than as a little child?

Chapter XII

1. What is the difference between an excuse and a reason?
2. How does the devil manage to make the sinner blind to the truth in his case?
3. Do you believe that usually an excuse has back of it a reason, which is the real issue?
4. If there is a pretended excuse, then does not the unwilling sinner add hypocrisy to his other sins?
5. If people are sincere in their adherence to their religious views, will that exclude the necessity for the cross of Christ?

6. Should we refrain from giving the true gospel to others, because we fear there may be some who will say we are making proselytes?
7. Are we narrow when we believe that any and all are competent to trust Jesus, and that every one anywhere is saved who accepts him as Saviour and Lord?

Chapter XIII

1. Are you willing to give every key to God in order to be a soul winner?
2. Why is it that one who realizes his sinful condition is more ready to be saved?
3. What is really back of the fear that we may not be "able to hold out faithful"?
4. Does feeling have its place in salvation, and if so, when and where may it be expected?
5. Why is it that saved men and women cannot entertain hatred toward those who may have wronged them?
6. Is unbelief due to mental conditions alone, or is it to be found rather in the attitude of the heart toward sin and toward God?
7. Has it been your experience that when one is willing to get down on his knees and tell God just what is in his heart, that he is soon trusting and happy?

Chapter XIV

1. Why did Saul of Tarsus, after his conversion, seek to join himself to the disciples?
2. If baptism and church membership are not essential to salvation, why give them so much emphasis?
3. What are the distinctive teachings of Baptists as to salvation and the meaning of church membership?
4. What is meant by citizenship and by religious liberty and by the separation of Church and State?
5. How many privileges can you name that come to those who seek worship and fellowship and work in the churches?
6. Where do you find the characteristics of a church of Christ, and what are the evidences of its being true to him?
7. What are some of the necessary deductions when we remember that the church is not merely an organization, but is an organism of which Christ is the head and the life?

Chapter XV

1. What is the difference between being a disciple and being an apostle?

2. How will it help us in our Christian life and work if we practice the presence of Jesus?
3. To what extent are we as possessors of the good news of salvation responsible for the eternal welfare of others?
4. Why is it true that church members who make much of the world are rarely if ever used in the winning of any soul to Christ? (1 John 2: 15.)
5. What is the unfailing result when the Christian neglects to feed upon God's Word and fails to be busy in the work of the Lord?
6. Where else, other than in the Bible, have you seen that giving of self to others is the way to increasing growth and power and purity and satisfaction?
7. There can be no doubt as to the final and complete triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom, but the question for each worker to ask is, What share am I to have in the glorious victory?

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